

COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOL

# Standard Application Guidebook and Review Rubric

JUNE 2015



COLORADO LEAGUE of  
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**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

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# Part I: Standard Application Component Descriptions

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For each component description listed below, consult Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for more detail, links to resources and requirements per state statute.

## A. Executive Summary

The executive summary serves as a concise explanation of the proposed charter school and identifies who is submitting the charter application.

This section should be two to three pages long and include:

- Vision and mission statements.
- The proposed school's name, grade levels to be served, proposed opening date (month and year), grade levels upon opening and growth plan (if the school does not plan to initially open with all grade levels).
- Size of the school at build-out including the number of classes per grade level and the number of students per class.
- A short explanation of the key programmatic features the school will implement in order to accomplish its vision and mission.
- A summary of evidence of community need, for a school of this nature, serving the target population, in the proposed location.
- Any other unique features, such as a non-traditional school year, longer school day, key partner organizations, multiple campuses, school culture, etc.
- Student body to be served, such as key demographic data, targeted geographical area, etc. Brief summary of the critical qualifications, credentials and attributes that will be looked for in a leader, the leadership team and board role in school governance, financial and academic implementation and oversight, as well as the management structure.

**See: Section A. *Executive Summary* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## B. Vision & Mission Statements

A charter school application must have both a vision and mission statement for the proposed school. The vision statement is a statement of how the charter school will look once it is operating (the big picture view). The mission statement is how the school intends to make that vision a reality.

The vision and mission statements should be succinct, easy to understand and easy to remember. Many schools post their vision/mission statement throughout their building and use it in their printed materials (e.g. Parent/Student Handbook and Employee Handbook). Resist the temptation to please

everyone with these statements. Instead, define your school for potential students, parents and staff. Be as clear as possible and don't use education "jargon." Again, be clear so as to lend clarity to those who will ultimately implement the vision over the life of the charter school.

**See: Section B. *Vision & Mission Statements* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

### C. Goals, Objectives & Pupil Performance Standards

Accreditation is the process by which school districts and public schools receive certification from the State Board of Education. Accreditation rules are established to foster greater accountability from public schools and school districts for the betterment of public education through the use of School Performance Frameworks (SPF) and District Performance Frameworks (DPF). SPF and DPF hold districts and schools accountable for performance on the same single set of indicators and measures and inform a differentiated approach to state support based on performance need. Performance evaluation leads to accreditation. This section should be based on the state Performance Indicators, which can be found at the Colorado Department of Education website (See *Goals, Objectives and Pupil Performance Standards* and *Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance* in the Quality Standards for more information and exact location of Performance Indicators). The authorizer may use this section of the charter school application as a basis for the accreditation plan it creates with the approved charter school. The application should reflect an understanding of the accreditation requirements of the chartering authority with a clear plan from the charter school applicants outlining how data will be obtained, and how that data will be provided to the chartering authority for their accreditation contract requirements (including Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) with CDE.

It is understood that there are not actual baseline test scores, attendance rates, or other data before the school is established. A charter applicant should use the district or neighborhood average as a baseline until they have begun to collect their own data in the first year of operation.

In Colorado, there are multiple forms of accountability by which public schools, including public charter schools, are measured. The State Board of Education has approved accreditation contracts with each of the school districts and the Charter School Institute (CSI). School districts and the CSI, in turn, accredit each of their public schools. The process for individual public schools to be accredited oftentimes mirrors the authorizer's accreditation plan. Familiarity with the authorizer's accreditation plan is essential for writing to this section well.

The Colorado Department of Education conducts annual reviews of the performance of public schools and districts in the state and summarizes these into School Performance Frameworks (SPF) and District Performance Frameworks (DPF). The performance frameworks currently measure attainment on four key performance indicators identified in SB 09-163 as the measures of educational success: academic achievement, academic growth, growth gaps and postsecondary and workforce readiness. State identified measures and metrics for each of these performance indicators are combined to arrive at an overall evaluation of a school's or a district's performance. For districts, the overall evaluation leads to their accreditation. For schools, the overall evaluation leads to the type of Unified Improvement Plan

schools will implement. Districts will continue to accredit schools, and they may do so using the state's performance framework or using their own approved frameworks, which can be more exhaustive or stringent than the state framework.

In addition to Performance Indicators required by state law, a charter school may choose to have other measures for which they wish to be held accountable. Those indicators may include school climate or culture, or other elements related to their vision and mission. Applicant schools may want to only include measures that they are willing to be held accountable for over time, as these additional indicators often become a part of the school's accountability plan.

**See: Section C. *Goals, Objectives & Pupil Performance Standards* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

#### **D. Educational Program & Standards**

A charter school application should include a description of the school's educational program, pupil performance standards and curriculum that meet or exceed Adequate Growth on the Colorado Growth Model and must be designed to enable each pupil to achieve state standards. Content standards are specific statements of what a student should know or be able to do at which grade level relative to a particular academic area or areas. Instruction and assessment, in a standards based system, should be aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards. The Colorado Academic Standards and suggested grade level expectations for each subject area are available online at the Colorado Department of Education website at [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us) under Standards and Instruction.

This section should clearly align with the school's mission, goals, and the student population to be served. There should be a current research basis for selecting a particular curriculum and instructional approach. Information can be obtained from the publisher. The research should support using the curriculum with the student body the proposed school will likely attract, and benchmark assessments should be chosen to align with the chosen curriculum.

All core content areas plus supplemental or elective areas should be described. If certain characteristics of the school culture are critical to the overall educational program (i.e., small school size, character education and high expectations), the research basis should thoroughly support the unique educational program design. Professional Development, time allotted in the calendar and student and teacher schedules, the staffing plan and the budget should all reflect a cohesive connection with the educational program.

**See: Section D. *Education Program & Standards* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## E. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students\*

As public schools, charter schools must open their enrollment to any student and must provide appropriate exceptional student services, as needed, for students. Legal obligations need to be addressed in all areas identified in statute pertaining to educationally disadvantaged, exceptional, gifted and talented, and English language learner students. The application should explain identification, adaptations and interventions, materials that may be used, staffing, and the research basis behind the identified areas.

The charter school developer should consider the general philosophy of the school when developing the philosophy for delivery of exceptional student services. For instance, a charter school may have an experiential delivery model making the needs of a student with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) more unique. Further, a charter school with a philosophy that no student “falls through the cracks” may have an aggressive remediation program for students who are not attaining their full academic potential and yet do not qualify for special education services.

While charter schools can obtain waivers from teacher licensure, Special Education licensure cannot be waived.

The application should contain sufficient detail about the delivery of exceptional student services, ELL and other specific needs areas consistent with the school’s educational program while still allowing for flexibility between the authorizer and the charter school to best deliver services.

Authorizers are increasingly interested in ascertaining the capacity of the charter school to implement compliance services in order to limit potential liability issues for the authorizer.

**See: Section E. *Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## F. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension

Although all charter schools must meet the minimum standards for student discipline, expulsion and suspension, they do not have to fit into the traditional “box.” Charter schools can have their own policies as long as the statutory minimums are met. Many charter schools have sought and obtained waivers from related laws that provide for flexibility and a unique approach to student discipline.

Most charter school contracts stipulate which party (the authorizer or the charter school) has the authority to suspend or expel students. Statute states that either a charter school authorized by CSI, or CSI itself, may expel, suspend or deny admission of students. During contract negotiations this issue must be decided. Therefore, the charter application should detail how the charter school proposes to handle student discipline, expulsion and suspension. Many applications include policies that the potential charter school would use. The education of expelled students is the responsibility of the public school that expelled them. Include an explanation of how the charter school will provide for an alternative education, if applicable.



**See: Section F. *Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## G. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance

A charter school application should include a clear plan for evaluating pupil performance across the curriculum. This plan should align with state performance standards, as well as with the school's pupil performance goals, and should be presented along with a clear timeline for achieving these standards/goals. A clear explanation of the types of assessments and frequency of administration should be included, reflecting thoughtfulness given to tracking student progress while still preserving as much class learning time as possible. A plan for the use of data gathered through assessments should include procedures for taking corrective action (both individually and collectively) if pupil performance falls below expected performance targets.

A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments, as well as interim (more frequent, end of unit assessments), to track student skill and knowledge development. The plan will include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers and how this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum.

In a well-developed assessment plan, consideration should be given to: the appropriateness of assessments to the curriculum; what will serve as baseline for student progress comparisons; the inclusion of state and federal assessments to demonstrate appropriate student growth; the ability of the assessment plan to provide for the early detection of students struggling with curriculum content; and the ability of assessments to reflect the use of basic skills at grade-appropriate levels (i.e., reading, writing, problem-solving, etc.).

Be aware that all Colorado public schools, including charter schools, are subject to Colorado's required state assessments, which are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards. Access the CDE website for detailed information regarding this program. All Colorado public schools, including charter schools, are also subject to the Colorado READ Act, which mandates that all students will be reading at grade level by the end of the third grade before they can move on to the fourth grade. This law requires that the reading growth of all students be monitored carefully from kindergarten through third grade through the use of approved interim assessments. Students not reading at grade level must be placed on individual plans through high school. Further information about literacy intervention is also available on the CDE website.

Colorado public schools are also responsible for demonstrating adequate academic achievement and growth according to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the primary federal law pertaining to K-12 education, the current version of which is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The main goal of ESEA is to help all students in the state to reach proficiency in English language arts/reading and mathematics. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education approved Colorado's NCLB Waiver request of certain accountability provisions, replacing the federal ESEA measure of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with Colorado's Growth Model (the [Education Accountability Act of 2009, SB 09-163](#)), giving



Colorado the authority to use the state's accountability system in place of key federal accountability requirements. Colorado's state accountability system now meets many of the NCLB requirements, including the requirement to annually determine school and district progress in meeting performance targets.

Finally, if the charter application includes high school, graduation requirements for the school should be included, along with how those requirements meet Graduation Guidelines, standards put forth by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education for college preparation, and/or how requirements prepare students to enter the workforce with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills

**See: Section G. *Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## H. Enrollment Policy and Outreach

The Colorado Charter Schools Act allows the authorizer and the charter applicant the flexibility to use any enrollment policy, such as a wait list or lottery, so long as it is not discriminatory. The federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) subgrant, administered by CDE, requires the use of a lottery that meets federal guidance. Many charter schools have elected to use a lottery in order to access these Start-up and Implementation subgrant funds. The Colorado CSP grant is the only federal grant requiring the use of a lottery. A charter school is required to use an approved lottery only during the time it is spending or encumbering these subgrant funds.

The lottery policies and plan for enrollment should demonstrate how the school plans to enroll the intended student population. State law does require a public charter school to not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. It is important to distinguish between admission decisions and academic placement decisions. The Colorado Charter Schools Act prohibits discrimination based on academic ability. Diagnostic or placement exams may be given to students only after they have been officially enrolled.

Charter School Lottery Policies Should Address:

- The date of the annual lottery.
- The definition of “founding family” and “staff” children not to exceed 20% of the school’s total population.
- How the community will receive adequate notice about the formation of a new charter school.
- Any requirement for parents to reaffirm their intent to enroll on an annual basis.
- What happens to names not drawn in the lottery.
- How siblings of enrolled students are handled in the process.
- How long parents have to make a decision on whether or not their child will attend the school.

This section should also explain how students and parents were informed of the proposed charter school and what community meetings were conducted. Outreach activities described should be diverse and designed to reach all students in the community, thereby, ensuring equal access. If relevant to the community, meetings should be bilingual.

The type of outreach activities that have been made to at-risk populations should be specifically addressed, especially if the application is for the state CSI, whose mission is to serve at-risk student populations.

**See: Section H. *Enrollment Policy and Outreach* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## I. Governance

Charter school governance is extremely important to the success of a charter school. Oftentimes, a proposed charter school's applicant team transitions to become the school's founding governing board. The charter school application should describe the process involved in developing the applicant team and the individual expertise represented on this steering committee; the process to appoint or elect the initial governing board; how and when bylaws will be adopted by the board; the governance structure for the school; the nature and/or extent of parental and/or community involvement in governance; and the amount of authority the governing board will convey to the school's administrator, along with a clear delineation of their respective roles and the means by which the administrator will be evaluated.

While some existing Colorado charter schools have staff members on the governing board, most do not. Administrators may be an ex-officio, nonvoting board member. If staff members have voting privileges, there should be clear policies to explain when that board member should recuse him/herself. Any potential conflict of interest by any board member should be disclosed and addressed.

The number of directors on a charter school board should not be less than five and it is generally considered a best practice to have no more than nine directors.

A good way to mitigate any potential issues with board members is to have the governing board adopt and use a Board Member Agreement. These agreements stipulate the qualifications, responsibilities and expected behaviors of individual board members and the governance structure. If the applicant team intends for the approved charter school's governing board to use a Board Member Agreement, it could be an attachment to the charter school application.

The charter school application should also describe the school's legal status. All charter schools must at some point file articles of incorporation and bylaws with the Secretary of State in order to have their school recognized as a corporation. The articles and bylaws define the authority that rests in the charter school governing board and, in essence, "who holds the charter." These legal issues should be discussed with a charter school attorney before decisions are made. Additionally, the charter school can apply for its own tax-exempt status with the IRS. Charter schools can either use their own tax-exempt status or use their authorizer's if the school is authorized by a school district. The CSI requires all of its schools to have their own tax-exempt status. Check with the potential authorizer for more information.

The charter school governing board must operate in compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law and Public Records Act, as well as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. If the school will be contracting with an Educational Service Provider (ESP), a full description of the relationship should be provided in that section.

Every charter school governing board should have a set of board policies. Much of what is included in the charter school application will become board policy. For instance, the school's vision/mission statement, legal status, enrollment policy, discipline policy and nondiscrimination policy should all be included in the board policy book. These board policies should be made available to school staff and families. Generally, schools put these policies on their website and have them available in the school office.

**See: Section I. *Governance* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for more information on relevant laws, a link to a CDE guidebook on Open Meetings, and for board training modules and best practice documents for governing boards.**

## **J. Evidence of Support**

A charter school application should include the aggregate number of students interested in the charter school at the different grade levels. Individual student and/or family information should NOT be included. Do NOT include copies of the Letters of Intent completed by prospective parents. Reference to the figures in the Intent to Enroll Form should be used, with updated numbers if necessary. If appropriate to further demonstrate support, applicants may disaggregate the number of prospective students by zip code, school of attendance, gender or type of current school (home, private, public), and grade level. After the charter school is approved, the founders will need to go through an enrollment process to verify which students will be attending the charter school. It may be helpful for there to be included letters of support from community leaders, business people or elected officials. These letters should state why the individual believes a new charter school would best serve the community. The tone of this section should illustrate a positive foundation of community support as opposed to a groundswell based on criticism. Care should be given to avoid derogatory comments about the authorizer's current curricular and program offerings.

The applicant team's ties to and knowledge of the community should be explained. If the applicant team has established any partnerships or networking relationships, they should be described along with any resources or agreements that are planned, including a Letter of Support or Intent.

**See: Section J. *Evidence of Support* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## **K. Parent & Community Involvement**

One of the most distinctive characteristics of charter schools is that they are choice schools. Due to this characteristic, many charter schools have a small school atmosphere and a culture of "everyone belongs to the community." The application should demonstrate the expectations and plans for ongoing parent and community involvement and the support of volunteers through specific volunteer networks.

It is important for charter school developers to provide adequate notice to the community about the possibility of the new charter school. Some parts of the community may need additional outreach. For

example, fliers may need to be published in a second language. Many charter developers have delivered fliers to individual homes in a community.

The applicant should be clear about what the new charter school will look like and the process for getting the school approved. The applicant should also establish early the school's value for meaningful parental involvement; explain to parents their role in the charter school through volunteering, monitoring their child's education and holding the school accountable, and designate an individual on the steering committee to follow up with parents who are interested in getting involved with the development of the charter school.

Engagement of network(s) with established civic and organizations in the community the school will serve should also be included. Whenever possible, applicants should arrange to have Parent Information Meetings in the community where the school will be located, and be sure to reach out to a broad cross-section of the community.

**See: Section K. *Parent & Community Involvement* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## L. Budget & Finance

The budget and financial plan for the charter school must include a plan for revenues and expenditures, as well as a plan for compliance with state and federal accounting and reporting requirements. The plan should demonstrate diligent financial practices, clear alignment to the other components in the application, and strong oversight. Particular attention should be given to facility and salary costs, as these often represent the largest portions of the school's budget.

The proposed budget should be based on reasonable estimates that reflect choices made throughout the rest of the charter application. For example, enrollment projections used elsewhere in the application need to be the same enrollment projections used in the development of the budget. Similarly, facility, insurance and employment plans discussed in other sections of the application should be reflected in the budget, along with the basis for given assumptions.

The budget should demonstrate an ability to understand the sources of funding available to the charter school and the types of expenditures required to operate the charter school. The primary source of revenue is Per Pupil Revenue (PPR). There are several other sources of revenue, some of which are temporary or restricted and some of which are dependent on market factors other than enrollment. However, PPR is the guaranteed stream of revenue that makes up most of the funding the school receives. When developing the budget, all ongoing expenditures required to operate the school should be supported by PPR.

The amount of PPR varies by school district. A charter school receives 100% of the PPR for the geographic school district in which the charter school physically resides. The charter school authorizer, whether a school district or the CSI, may retain up to 5% of PPR to cover the charter school's portion of the authorizer's administration costs in overseeing the charter school. In cases where the maximum is withheld, the charter school effectively receives 95% of its school district's PPR. When projecting

revenue numbers, the single most important factor to understand is enrollment. Enrollment projections must be accurate, and it is best to project conservatively for budget purposes.

Other sources of revenue can be very helpful in funding specific programs or in helping with startup costs for new charter schools. These sources include federal grants, private grants, fundraising, and more. CDE ([www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)) and the Colorado League of Charter Schools (the League) ([www.coloradoleague.org](http://www.coloradoleague.org)) are good resources for finding information about current sources of funding.

When considering expenditures, it is important to understand how choices affect different areas of the budget. For example, the smaller the class size the more revenue needed per pupil to cover classroom costs. Also, the more staff there is in the school the less money to spend per staff member or on other priorities. Finally, as another example, the more money spent on facility costs, the less money there is for salaries and other discretionary items.

In nearly all cases, the combination of facility costs and staff salaries/benefits represents close to 75% of spending in charter schools. As such, close attention should be paid to these two areas. In addition to these, other items that need to be planned for financially include special education, various professional services, classroom supplies and materials, technology, furnishings, general supplies and materials, liability insurance, and more. Existing Colorado charter schools that have a similar mission/philosophy are a good resource for considering necessary expenditures.

In addition to budget projections, the charter school must comply with various requirements. In summary, the charter school needs to set up proper accounting procedures to safeguard its assets and to ensure accurate financial reporting. At the same time, it is important to be able to provide financial information in a clear, understandable format that allows board members and administrators to make sound financial decisions. Note that online schools may have special considerations with respect to budgeting and financial reporting.

Many of the CDE requirements for financial management and reporting are available in the Financial Policies and Procedures manual and an additional resource with general information is the Colorado Charter School Financial Management Guide, links are available for both these guides in the *Budget and Finance* section of the Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools.

**See: Section L. *Budget & Finance* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for the referenced guides, links, resources and more detailed information and on this component of the application.**

## M. Facilities

One of the greatest challenges to opening a new school is finding a suitable facility. The most important thing for applicants to demonstrate during the application process is to show a strong, clearly-articulated facility plan. It can be difficult to negotiate for facility space without having an approved charter. It is not necessary to have a signed formal agreement for a facility during the application process, but any viable options should be explained and should include reasonable space requirements, a reasonable plan for space utilization, a discussion of how the facility will be ready for use when the

school opens and, most importantly, reasonable costs of that facility which must be reflected in the proposed budget.

Charter schools may rent, lease, own, or otherwise finance facility space. In some cases, a school district may have an unused facility; in other cases, a charter school may share space with another tenant. Many charter schools have been able to finance their own facilities with tax-exempt bond financing through the Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority (CECFA).

With any facility, building permits and inspections are required. Life and safety requirements (including asbestos regulations) apply to rented or contributed facilities as well. The state is responsible for issuing certificates of occupancy for public schools, and information can be obtained by calling the Department of Labor at 303-318-8000. In addition, contact your community's planning and zoning department, as well as the facilities director for the authorizing district/CSI for further information concerning the permit, life and safety and inspection requirements of local entities.

**See: Section M. *Facilities* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## N. Transportation & Food Service

### N.1. Transportation

A charter school may choose not to provide any transportation or food services or may choose to negotiate with a school district, BOCES or private provider to provide transportation services or with a district or private provider for food services for its students. Colorado law does not require a charter school to provide transportation or food services.

If a charter school chooses to provide transportation or food services, a plan for each area must be included in the application. The transportation plan should include provisions for transporting students to and from the charter school and their homes, and to and from the charter school and any extracurricular activities. For food services the plan should include a description about how this service will be offered either initially or at a later time. In addition, a description of how the charter school plans to meet the needs specifically of low-income and academically low-achieving pupils should be included for both.

The provision of transportation services has several implications. First of all, the cost must be included in the charter school's budget. Secondly, insurance and liability issues must be addressed when assessing the charter school's overall insurance needs. Insurance coverage should meet required thresholds for liability whether the school uses public or private vehicles. Finally, many federal and state rules and regulations relate to the provision of transportation services. One specific rule to be aware of is that any small vehicles or school buses owned and operated by a charter school or under contract must meet the safety and operating standards as prescribed in State Board Rules 1 CCR 301-25, 301-26 and 301-29.

**See: Section N.1. *Transportation* of Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## N.2. Food Service

Schools with a significant number of students who could qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) program are strongly encouraged to offer some sort of lunch program. The provision of food services may or may not have a negative effect on the school's budget, depending on whether it is a program under the district food services umbrella with an agreement for the same provisions given other schools in the district or is provided through a private contractor. The school must collect FRL qualifying information from students and that process should be included in the food services plan. (Schools not providing a lunch program will still collect this information, but using a different form).

The plan should include whether the school intends to use a private or district food services provider, how the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) qualification forms will be distributed, collected and recorded, and how the facility will be brought into compliance or be built to meet any federal requirements for food warming or preparation, if needed to meet FRL regulations. The charter school can only be reimbursed for its FRL program through an authorized "school food authority." If the school will not be using an approved FRL program, or provide any lunch program, this section should include how students who would qualify for a Free or Reduced price lunch and how students who forget their lunch will be accommodated.

**See: Section N.2. *Food Service* of Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## O. Employees

A charter school must provide an explanation of the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees. This must include evidence that the terms and conditions of employment are addressed with affected employees and their recognized representative, if any. Explanation should be given of qualifications for the school leader, faculty and staff, and how they will be evaluated and supported through ongoing professional development. In addition, proposed employment policies should be included.

As charter schools are, by statute, public schools and government entities, employees of charter schools are thus considered public employees. Charter schools and their employees must participate in Colorado's Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA) defined benefit retirement fund. This is in lieu of participation in Social Security, which makes up the majority of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll tax. However, the Medicare portion of FICA is still paid by the employees and matched by the employer.

With the growing presence of private educational management organizations in Colorado, questions are arising about the nature of employees in some charter schools. This is a result of some educational management companies treating employees as employees of the private company, as opposed to employees of the public school. These determinations need to be made with legal counsel, but the nature of employees should be clearly outlined in the charter application.



**See: Section O. *Employees* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for more detailed information on this component of the application as well as tax information, information about PERA and human resources.**

## **P. Insurance Coverage**

Charter schools must have appropriate insurance coverage. This includes workers compensation, liability insurance, and insurance for the building and its contents. Charter schools are public entities and liability is limited by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, C.R.S. 24-10-101 et seq.

The risk management office in the local school district is a very good resource for finding information about particular insurance needs. In addition, the Colorado School District Self Insurance Pool is the insurance provider for many charter schools and can provide information about typical coverage and costs. If insurance needs are understood, cost estimates should be incorporated into the proposed budget that includes reasonable assumptions or quotes. The selected or intended insurance coverage should be commensurate with the overall school program and risk factors.

**See: Section P. *Insurance Coverage* in the companion resource: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## **Q. Dispute Resolution Process**

This section is simply a paragraph or two that reflects the school's understanding of and compliance with the requirements stipulated in Colorado Revised Statutes that explains how the school and its authorizer agree to resolve disputes that may arise concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract.

**See: Section Q. *Dispute Resolution Process* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## **R. Waivers**

The technical means by which charter schools operate is via waiver from certain state laws, state rules and/or school district policies. Charter schools applying for waiver of school district policies should contact their charter school liaison if those policies are not listed on the school district's website. Information on applying for waivers from the state is on the CDE Charter Schools website on the Charter Schools page.

Upon the establishment of a charter school contract, certain "automatic waivers" from statute are granted that the State Board will not require submission of a rationale and replacement plan, though the authorizer could still require this. Any charter school wishing to request waivers from statutes in

addition to those automatically waived, must provide a rationale and replacement plan that explains how the school will meet the intent of the law, which their district may submit to the Colorado State board of Education for review and approval. It is advisable that the school considers during their formation how they will address the intent of the statutes that have been granted automatic waivers.

Attached to the application should be:

- Waivers requested from the state.
- Waivers requested from the school district or CSI.

**See: Section R. *Waivers* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

## S. School Management Contracts

(To be completed only if the proposed school intends to contract with an education service provider for management of the school).

If the proposed charter school intends to contract with an education service provider (ESP), such as a charter management organization (CMO), education management organization (EMO), charter collaborative, or any other type of school management provider, for management of the school, it must address the following issues:

- An explanation of how and why the ESP was selected.
- Detailed explanation of the ESP's success in serving student populations similar to the targeted student population, including demonstrated academic achievement as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extra-curricular programs).
- A term sheet setting forth the proposed duration of the management contract; roles and responsibilities; scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP; performance evaluation measures and timelines; compensation structure including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.
- A draft of the proposed management contract including all of the above terms.
- Explanation of the relationship between the school governing board and the ESP, specifying how the governing board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the service provider, the internal controls that will guide the relationship, and how the governing board will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations, or have a means for severing the contract.
- Explanation of which staff will report to or be paid by the ESP.
- Evidence that the corporate entity is authorized to do business in Colorado.

Attached to the application should be:

- Term sheet (described above).
- Proposed management contract.

- Evidence that the management provider is authorized to do business in Colorado and evaluating performance of the ESP and adequate internal controls are in place.
- A clear description of which staff members will be hired, evaluated and terminated by the ESP, and any relationship with the governing board on these decisions.

**See: Section S. *School Management Contracts* in Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools for links, resources and more detailed information on this component of the application.**

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## Part II: Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools

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### Introduction

The following quality standards have been developed for founding groups that are in the process of designing a charter school and writing a charter application. The Colorado League of Charter Schools (the League) has created these standards in order to provide clear guidance for developing groups on what it means to be a high-quality, successful applicant. These quality standards also serve to support charter school application reviewers in understanding the elements of a quality charter school plan. By understanding and meeting these standards, and following through with their well-developed processes, new schools are more likely to be met with success through the application and start-up process. In addition, by meeting these standards and creating the foundation for a high-quality school, the developing group promotes the spirit of the League's mission by positively contributing to quality schools as a whole.

It is the hope of the League that groups in the process of developing charter schools will use these standards to gauge their readiness for submitting an application and eventually opening a quality school. If a founding committee finds that they do not yet meet most of these standards, the committee may want to consider postponing their application submission until they are better prepared. The standards should serve as a guide and reference point for these groups as they work through the development process.

The League believes strongly that if a charter applicant can demonstrate that it meets these standards, it is likely to be successful in the application and start-up process. Should a strong application that meets these standards be submitted, by a high-quality founding group, and denied by a charter authorizer, the school will be better positioned to appeal the decision to the State Board of Education. Meeting these standards will better position the school, once approved, to seek operating grants and facilities financing, and open a quality school.

The League recognizes that meeting these standards takes a great deal of time and commitment. While the League fully expects all developing schools to meet these standards, the League is also highly committed to supporting schools in their efforts to rise to these high levels of performance. The League will provide developing groups with much of the information and resources needed to meet these standards. In return, the school holds the responsibility for being teachable and bringing the human resources, time, drive, and commitment to excellence to the development process. Development of the following categories is recommended for maximum effectiveness.

The quality standards for developing charter schools are broken down into the following categories:

- Charter School Knowledge and Best Practices
- Community Outreach
- Founding Committee
- Commitment to Accountability
- Application

### Charter School Knowledge and Best Practices

The charter school founding committee demonstrates a commitment to understanding charter schools and pursuing best educational practices.

- Multiple members of the founding committee have attended at least two League-endorsed conferences or workshops prior to submittal of the charter application.
- The founding committee participates fully in the League's New Schools Development Program <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?nsdsupport> and works actively with the Colorado League of Charter Schools during the application and start-up process.
- Appropriate members of the founding committee have received training in the areas of accountability and performance management, prior to submitting their application.
- All members of the founding board commit to governance, accountability, and performance management training, to begin prior to opening and to be completed within the first year of operation, to ensure they understand progress monitoring and interventions, legal requirements, and their role of oversight as they transition the school operations to the school leader.
- The founding committee is committed to understanding and implementing research-based best practices whether based on extensive formal research studies or simply on other schools with a solid history of academic success.
- Members of the founding committee have visited and informally evaluated at least three successful charter schools.
- The founding committee demonstrates a strong commitment to ongoing professional development for the governing board, school administration, and staff and faculty. This commitment is reflected in the school's application, calendar, and allocation of financial resources.
- Members of the founding committee have read the Charter School Act (C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 *et. seq.*) available at: <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/colorado/>, (Title 22 Education/ School Districts) and several strong sample applications from other schools, other Colorado Education statutes as outlined throughout the quality standards, and a variety of additional resources provided by the League and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).  
(<http://www.cde.state.co.us/choice/index.htm>)

### Community Outreach

The founding committee actively focuses its development efforts on effective outreach practices.

- The founding committee has adequately researched the community in which the charter school will exist; has knowledge of the demographics, cultural and academic needs; and has interviewed a variety of community members to verify that there is a need and desire for the charter school in the community.
- The founding committee has adequately researched the student population to be served to understand their educational needs and what services are currently in place to meet those needs.

- The founding committee actively networks with community leaders, local legislators, and other key figures in the community in order to understand the community and to build ongoing relationships as well as garner support for the charter school.
- The founding committee proactively develops a relationship with the charter authorizer. This relationship is initiated by notifying the authorizer of the group's intent to apply for a charter and is maintained throughout the application process. The founding committee seeks guidance from the authorizer and actively works to understand the authorizer's expectations.
- The founding committee recruits additional founding committee and prospective board members in order to broaden the pool of expertise and the skill-base of those working to start the school.
- The founding committee actively educates families in the community about the school and solicits students for enrollment. The founding committee develops outreach strategies to ensure equitable access to a diverse group of families in the community. Enrollment is made available to all students.
- The founding committee understands its role in representing and advocating for the charter school movement. The school makes decisions and works in such a way that the charter school sector will be well-represented.

#### Founding Committee

The founding committee consists of multiple parents, community members, educators, business persons, or other stakeholders who are well-situated to successfully start a high-quality charter school.

- The founding committee has a genuine personal interest or concern for the student population to be served. This motivation can be clearly articulated by all members of the founding committee. The founding committee is not driven to create a charter school by personal, financial, political, or other counterproductive motivations.
- The founding committee consists of self-driven people who have the motivation, time, and other resources necessary to undertake the challenging task of starting a charter school.
- The founding committee places integrity and ethical practices at the forefront in all decision-making processes.
- The founding committee has designated an individual or a small leadership team to provide collaborative leadership, including delegating responsibilities to other members of the founding committee, keeping other members of the committee on task, and seeing the application/start-up process through from start to finish.
- The founding committee demonstrates a willingness to consider and implement outside feedback and recommendations.
- The founding committee consists of at least three individuals who have diverse skill sets (e.g. education, educational leadership, curriculum, understanding of assessment/accountability, business/finances, legal, fundraising, etc.)
- The founding committee recognizes areas of weakness and need in its composition (e.g. absence of a business perspective, legal perspective, educational perspective, real estate, etc.) and actively solicits support from outside individuals/organizations in these areas.

- The members of the founding committee are committed to working together collaboratively. Processes are in place to hear all opinions, to respect dissenting opinions, and to move forward with effective decision-making, e.g. through a code of conduct, decision-making process, etc.

#### Commitment to Accountability

The founding committee demonstrates a commitment to accountability and this commitment is reflected in the school's development process, application, and goals upon opening.

- The founding committee has successfully participated in the League's application review process prior to the submission of the charter application to the chartering authority.
- The founding committee commits to having the school participate in a comprehensive self-study and external site visit review, such as those provided by either the CDE Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) or another external party, within the first three years of the school's existence, and has allocated financial resources in order to support this review process.
- The founding committee understands statutory guidance on School Accountability Committees (SAC) and commits to forming such a committee upon the school's opening. (C.R.S. 22-11-401 to 406)
- The founding committee is committed to having the school create a performance management plan and an annual Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), which includes specific performance goals, action plan and progress monitoring. This commitment will be communicated both in the charter application and when the applicant transitions from a founding committee to a board-governed, administrator-run school.
- The founding committee is committed to building a permanent institution that sustains the integrity of the founders' vision and transfer of values through: written documentation and ongoing review of core values, ongoing documentation of board decisions, processes for transfer of leadership (both for the board and the school's administration), and effective policy making at the board level.
- The founding committee has educated themselves about the state accountability system, including the required assessments, school performance framework, types of performance plans, performance indicators, Colorado Growth Model, and the Unified Improvement Plan.

#### Application

The school's charter application reflects an overall commitment to quality.

This standard consists of several general indicators for a high-quality charter application, and then specific indicators based on the different application sections defined by state law (C.R.S. 22-30.5-106) (See link above.) The League has aligned the various sections to areas specified in statute, and described detail as to what should be included in each section. All sections of the application should describe a cohesive program that is tied together throughout the document. The League also offers support to new schools through an application review process.

When the League does an application review, it rates each section on a scale from 0 to 4. A score of 2 means that standards have been mostly met, a score of 3 indicates that the section adequately addresses the standards, and a score of 4 indicates that standards were exceeded. The sections indicated with an asterisk (\*) below are "essential component" sections that are considered absolutely critical to opening a quality school, and typically appear as an authorizers' more heavily weighted



requirements. We believe that a developer should only apply to an authorizer if all of these essential sections have received a score of 3 or higher.

The charter authorizer that is reviewing the application may have additional content requirements and formatting that the applicant must address, but the information below should cover most authorizers' basic requirements.

#### Overview

- Members of the founding committee have authored the school's charter application themselves. In cases where a consultant has been hired to write the application, the founding committee has worked closely with the consultant to communicate their ideas and vision for the school. Although it is certainly expected that the applicant will review several successful applications written by other schools, the applicant has not simply copied and pasted sections of another school's application. The school "owns" its application and all of the concepts embodied within it.
- Based on the research conducted and the founding committee's core educational values for the school, the committee has thoroughly discussed and evaluated the different aspects of the proposed school's educational program, governance structures, and other operations. After coming to agreement on what the various components of the school should look like, the founding committee has clearly articulated these concepts. All aspects of the school have been adequately discussed and are understood by the members of the founding committee.
- The committee has determined that their core educational values can realistically be implemented and sustained with limited financial resources.
- The application reflects thoughtful, research-based ideas and practices. The application provides extensive detail on the various components of the school's program and operations.
- The founding committee understands the authorizer's timelines for submitting charter applications. The committee actively plans around the authorizer's timelines and consistently meets deadlines in a timely manner.
- The application has been edited for spelling and grammatical errors and consistency of terms, especially in areas where other best practice charter documents were used in the development of sections of the application (e.g. the application uses the correct school name throughout.) The content that is included is necessary to describe the school, and adds relevance to the design and implementation of the program once the charter application receives approval from the authorizer.

The indicators for the various sections of the charter application are detailed in the following pages. For more information on the charter development process, see the Application Process Flowchart with imbedded links at

<http://startchartercolorado.org/index.html> and the [Colorado Charter School: Standard Application Guidebook and Review Rubric](#) which is available on this website. It is advised that the League's Quality Standards for Developing Charter Schools be used in conjunction with any authorizer specific content requirements and formatting, as the Quality Standards provide complete guidance on the content detail, and include hyperlinks to explain the detail of each section of the application. Sample

applications and section examples are available on the League’s website, at <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?page=nsdsampleapplication>, and resources specific to a charter model or a developing school’s needs can be sent upon request.

## Cover Letter (Optional)

The cover letter introduces the applicant and application to the charter authorizer and more importantly creates a paper trail documenting the date of submission, and expected time frame for the authorizer to make a decision. The cover letter:

- Specifically addresses the authorizer from whom a charter is being requested.
- Has a respectful tone that reflects the founding committee’s desire to work *with* the authorizer in providing an educational choice for students.
- Includes a brief summary of the proposed school, including its name, grades to be served, proposed location/community, and one or two key, unique characteristics about its educational program (Montessori, project-based, Core Knowledge, technology-focused, ELOB, etc.).
- Identifies a primary contact person for the proposed school and that person’s contact information. This is likely the chair of the founding committee or the president/chair of the governing board, if a board has already been formed.
- Communicates what is being requested (for example, a four-year charter contract to operate under the charter authorizer).
- Is signed by the primary contact person.

## A. Executive Summary

An **executive summary** is an overview. The purpose of an executive summary is to summarize the key points of a document for its readers, saving them time and preparing them for the upcoming content. The executive summary is approximately two to three pages, and concisely summarizes the charter proposal. This section of the application includes:

- The vision and mission statements.
- Information on who is submitting, the school’s name, grade levels to be served, proposed opening date (e.g. August of 2016), grade levels upon opening, and growth plan (if the school does not plan to initially open with all grade levels, show the first year’s enrollment and each year’s expected growth in a chart. See an example: <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?nsdplanninggrants> ).
- Size of the school at full build-out, including the grades served, number of classes per grade level and the number of students per class.
- A short explanation of the school culture and educational philosophy and key programmatic features

the school will implement in order to accomplish its vision and mission. Includes an overview of the school's core values about teaching and learning, the educational program and major instructional methods and assessment strategies, professional development, and highlights the research based elements supporting these approaches with the target population.

- A summary of evidence of community need and adequate interest, for a school of this nature, serving the target population, in the proposed location. This includes a summary of the student body to be served, including key demographic data, targeted geographical area, etc.
- Any other unique features, such as a non-traditional school year, longer school day, key partner organizations, multiple campuses, home-based program, etc.
- Brief summary of the critical qualifications, credentials and attributes that will be looked for in a leader, the leadership team and board role in school governance, financial and academic implementation and oversight, as well as the school management structure.

## B. Vision & Mission Statements

This section of the application reflects the school's vision and mission statements as developed and agreed upon by the members of the founding committee and are likely to produce high-quality education outcomes. These statements should answer the questions, "What is the purpose for the school and what is the applicant team's vision for the school?" The rest of the application should answer, "How exactly will we get there?" An explanation should be given as to the process and impetus for developing both the vision and mission statements.

The **vision** of the school articulates how the applicants envision the school and its impact in the future (five to ten years).

- The vision statement expresses the ideal, long-term impact, scope and scale of the school. It articulates *what* the school hopes to be, but not *how* the school will reach that vision. The vision should focus on essentials, be research based, and provide guidance to the board and administration as the school grows. (For example, all conversations about budget, planning, and staff development would be guided by the long-term vision.)
- The vision statement is focused on the future. It concisely and succinctly defines what the school looks like in five to ten years when it is "all grown up."
- The **mission statement** is short and concise, and no more than several sentences that present a clear, focused, compelling purpose that will guide the school's operations. (This is not a motto or marketing slogan.)
- A mission statement explains the fundamental purpose for the school. It should articulate clear guiding purposes and priorities that are meaningful, measurable, and attainable, and explain *how* the school will reach its vision.
- Focuses on high quality educational outcomes that are the driving force and rationale behind all other components of the application. It should be obvious to a reader of the application that the school's goals, educational program, operations, etc. all align with and support the fulfillment of the mission.
- The mission statement defines what skills, knowledge, and competencies a student who graduates from the

school will possess, and provides the entire community with a clear picture of what the school aims to achieve.

**Note:** An easy way to understand the difference between the vision and mission is that the mission focuses on the school's present state and day-to-day fundamentals of the school, while the vision focuses on the school's future. A strong example of a vision and mission can be found here:

<http://www.newlegacycharter.org/about/>

### C. Goals, Objectives, & Pupil Performance Standards \*

This section focuses on the specific outcomes anticipated for the school and its students within the terms of the requested charter contract (usually four years (C.R.S. 22-30.5-110(1)(a))). The majority of the goals and objectives are focused on specific student outcomes (pupil performance or educational performance goals); others are broader school-based goals and objectives (organizational and management performance goals).

**Note:** These will be used in the authorizer's annual review of the charter school's performance (C.R.S. 22-30.5-110(1)(b)) which, at a minimum, includes the school's progress in meeting the objectives identified in the plan the charter school is required to implement (C.R.S. 22-11-210) and the results of the school's most recent annual financial audit. The local school board must provide written feedback to the charter on an annual basis, which will become part of the body of evidence that will be used for renewal decisions. The applicant need not include detailed strategies for meeting the goals in this section, as that will be covered in several subsequent sections of the application.

- Applicant has developed no more than ten to twelve broad goals, with the majority (five to six minimum) focusing on educational performance. Each goal is a clear, measurable statement of what the school will accomplish with its students after a specific length of time attending the school.<sup>1</sup> These should provide a clear plan for the school to meet the state accountability measures and expectations that align with the authorizer's performance framework, based on the four performance indicators (achievement, growth, growth gaps, and for secondary schools, post-secondary and workforce readiness (PWR), as well as any federal expectations. There should also be goals based on the READ Act to include reducing the number of students who have significant reading deficiencies, and ensuring that each student achieves grade level expectations in reading, and secondary schools should include goals for ACT scores and graduation rates. (For more information on performance indicators see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview> )
- All goals are written as "SMART" goals, which means they are: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**mbitious and **A**ttainable, **R**eflective of and **R**elevant to the School's Mission, and **T**ime-Specific with a Target Date.
- Each goal is supported by:
  - **Benchmarks or Objectives:** Clear, measurable statements of what the school will accomplish

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the information in this section is taken from "Developing Sound Performance Goals and Measures: Guidance for Charter Schools" prepared by Margaret Lin, when she was the Senior Associate at the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

with its students at a given point in the school's development, usually showing a percent of growth each year or at more frequent intervals using (interim) assessments. Benchmarks allow monitoring of progress toward the ultimate goal, and clearly support the academic goals.

- **Measures:** The specific assessment tools that will be used to gauge whether the goals and benchmarks have been achieved (e.g. standardized tests, internal assessments, parent surveys, student surveys, School Performance Framework, Colorado Growth Model, etc.).
- **Timeline:** The goal or benchmarks should reflect how long the school anticipates taking to meet the goal or benchmark (e.g. annually, after three years, etc.), and the action plan to meet these goals.

- Goals and benchmarks are aligned to the vision and mission and are written taking into account that baseline data is not yet available.

**Note:** For example, without knowing at what level students will be able to perform when they enroll in the school, it would be premature to set a goal of 90% strong command on Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments, of which Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) English and Math assessments are a part, at the end of the first year in any grade or subject area. A better goal would be to state the percentage of students that will make adequate growth (above 60<sup>th</sup> percentile growth if students are behind/below grade level) as measured by the Colorado Growth Model using CMAS and any other nationally-normed assessments the school chooses to use. (For how to write goals around the Colorado Growth Model) see document on goal setting during the assessments transition starting on p. 7 of the linked UIP document:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/uiip/assessmenttransitionimplicationsforuiip2014.>)

- A description is included of how the school will collect and use longitudinal assessment data, in addition to the state model, to determine and improve academic progress of enrolled students, to include GT, ELL, minority, and Special Education.
- Goals address closing the achievement gap for all groups of students. The growth target should be justified based on research of the current performance of likely demographics of attendees, or the median adequate growth measure based on students in the neighborhood. This includes goals that reflect underachieving students making median adequate growth above the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile (some districts such as DPS require at least 65<sup>th</sup> percentile growth), and students on track or ahead making median adequate growth of at least the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. (See above goal setting link.)
- There is a demonstrated understanding of and strategy for complying with federal, state and authorizer achievement and reporting timeline requirements including those related to accountability reporting and Accreditation (e.g. the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) process, and the data pipeline.)
- The applicant includes several goals that demonstrate the school's plans to meet state and federal requirements through the Colorado performance indicators, outlined in the School Performance Framework (SPF) of achievement (status), growth, closing academic growth gaps, and post-secondary and workforce readiness with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and any additional authorizer goals. (For information about these indicators see specifically 'Performance Data by Indicator' section of tutorial

located at: [http://www2.cde.state.co.us/media/training/SPF\\_Online\\_Tutorial/player.html](http://www2.cde.state.co.us/media/training/SPF_Online_Tutorial/player.html))

- In addition to writing goals that cover core educational expectations (reading, writing, math, graduation rates, and other academic areas), the school has also developed goals around areas such as curriculum development, alignment of curriculum and instruction with state and authorizer standards, professional development, teacher retention, attendance and re-enrollment, financial management and solvency, governance, parent and community involvement and satisfaction, student engagement to include attendance, target reenrollment rate and satisfaction, and any other aspects of the program that are unique and essential to the school (e.g. service learning, multicultural education, outdoor education, foreign language acquisition, project-based learning, etc.) Specific measures and metrics for monitoring these additional goals are included.

## D. Educational Program & Standards \*

This critical section of the application details an effective, well thought out, research-based educational program. This section should clearly align with the school's mission, goals, and the student population to be served and the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). Everything in this section is research-based, whether based on extensive formal research studies or simply on other schools with a solid history of academic success. The application's authors specifically cite the research basis throughout this section. It is not assumed that the reader of the application will be familiar with common best practices or widely-known research within the field of education or charter schools. In summary, the Educational Program should address the interrelationship between the following:

- Goals - Overall school goals developed to ensure student and school progress;
- Curriculum - What you want your students to know and be able to do;
- Instruction - The activities and methodology for getting the curriculum to the students;
- Interventions - How the school will respond if some or all students do not master the curriculum (e.g. the school will use Response to Intervention (RtI) with all students, small group work, tutoring, etc. and The Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students section addresses a continuum of supports and services that are in place to meet the specific needs of identified groups of students.
- Supports- Includes structures of the schedule and calendar and professional development;
- Evaluation –Addresses the ways in which the school will assess if students master the curriculum and how that information will be used for making needed changes to the educational program;

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

### D.1. Educational Program & Standards: Educational Philosophy & Culture

This subsection describes the founding committee's core beliefs about education and how students learn and the planned culture with implementation strategies since this is the driving force behind the school's

educational program.

- Describes the founding committee's core beliefs about what a school of excellence looks like, and any research basis or academic history of the school model the school is replicating or adapting, as this will drive the school's educational program and operations. For example, if the founding committee believes that secondary students learn best when work is focused around group-based, interdisciplinary "real-life" projects, the application presents a picture of how this style of learning (which is based on a set of beliefs about how students learn best) will be implemented in the school.
- Articulates an understanding of the identified student population that is congruent with planned culture and educational philosophy.
- Includes an overview of the planned culture for the school and how this culture will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.
- Summarizes the systems, practices and traditions the school leader and leadership team will create to foster this culture in all students, staff, and parents from the first day of school are explained, and include a description of strategies that will be implemented to involve students in the school and their academics, including school-specific routines.
- Ensures alignment between the vision and mission statements, target population, school culture; and frames the context for choosing the curriculum, instructional practices, interventions, evaluations, and all components for the educational plan.

#### D.2. Educational Program & Standards: Curriculum

There should be a current research basis for selecting a particular curriculum for the target population. In addition to obtaining information from publishers, research is available online at ERIC ([www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov)) and the What Works Clearinghouse ([www.whatworks.ed.gov](http://www.whatworks.ed.gov)). The narrative in this subsection should describe the critical aspects of each component of the curriculum; lengthy research, full scope and sequence, a full-curriculum alignment with state standards, etc. should be included in the appendices rather than the application. The application should address curriculum alignment to state standards. (See the 10 subjects in the Colorado Academic Standards which can be found at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/coloradostandards-academicstandards>. For

Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Standards (CHPE):

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cohealthpe/statestandards>, and for health and wellness see detailed

description at <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?page=HealthWellness>, For a comprehensive resource concerning all health related regulations for healthy schools see:

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.coloradoleague.org/resource/collection/F7AE4E3F-69AC-439F-8E96-01B1FB7336CF/CLCSOpeningAHealthySchoolResourceBook.pdf>. It is advisable for schools considering

blended and online program components to review the information at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/blendedlearning> &

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/events>.)

- This subsection provides a detailed description of the school's curriculum tailored to meet the needs of the target population, including an overview of what will be taught at each grade level and all subject areas, a curriculum framework, along with the appropriate levels of detail for objectives,



content, and skills for each subject and for all grades the school will serve. 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills should also be addressed.

- If using an established school-wide program (e.g. Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound, Core Knowledge, Montessori, etc.) or another successful school as a model (e.g. High Tech High, Big Picture School, etc.), the application provides detailed information and research about the program or model. When possible, this should include research, experience, and objective evidence about the academic success of the chosen program/model, and in particular why it was chosen for this specific population. If evidence is not available, the applicant should explain why the proposed program is likely to be successful. It should be obvious how use of such a program supports the school's vision and mission, goals, student population, and educational philosophy. Again, the applicant does not assume that the reader of the application will be familiar with or supportive of an established curricular program.
- In all subject areas: If the founding committee has selected subject-specific skill-based programs or texts (e.g. Success for All, Open Court Reading, Everyday Math, Saxon Math, Step Up to Writing, etc.), detailed information is provided about these programs and how they support the school's vision and mission, goals, and educational philosophy. It is important to include the research-basis and success rate behind these programs as the authorizer may not be familiar with them or how they pertain to the target population. If the school will develop its own curriculum, sufficient detail should be given to understand the content at each grade level, scope and sequence, alignment to standards, implementation practices, and how these will all be communicated and tracked. Details of the plan for developing curriculum should also include staffing needs and cost to accomplish this, and the timeline for completion and implementation. (Choosing a textbook is different than choosing curriculum; the latter should address the important question of "what we want students to know and be able to do", and should relate to the means used to meet the state standards.) At a minimum, information should be included for each core subject area or Reading, Math, Writing, Science and Social Studies and explain how cultural relevance will be developed in the curriculum.
- If the school includes a high school, the application includes clear information on course offerings and descriptions to include electives, how the school will prep students for college and the workforce, promotion requirements to move to the next grade, planned graduation requirements/credits in comparison to district requirements, how credit hours are earned and appear on transcripts, how GPA is calculated, indicators for post-secondary readiness (to include ICAP), and how these requirements meet or exceed the school district's and Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) requirements. (Adopted by the State Board pursuant to C.R.S. 22-2-106 ) For a summary of college admissions standards, go to: <http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Academics/Admissions/coursecompletion.html>. For information on developing Colorado high school graduation requirements see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/graduationrequirements>. The application also addresses whether the school plans to implement a basic skills assessment ( i.e. ACCUPLACER See: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/accuplacer>.)

**Note:** For a summary of the requirements for the creation of Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP) for each secondary student, see Individual career and academic plans; (C.R.S.22-30.5-525(1) and (2)),

Board of Education – specific duties; (C.R.S. 22-32-109 and 109.5), Charter Schools – basic skills placement; (C.R.S. 22-30.5-117 and C.R.S. 22-30.5-526). Description of these plans should include how the student ICAP aligns to requirements set forth in (C.R.S. 22-7-1001 *et seq.* and C.R.S. 22-11-101, *et seq.*, and pursuant to C.R.S. 22-2-136(1)). (For more resources on ICAP see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/icap.>)

- The application defines how the school will know and ensure that the curriculum meets or exceeds the district educational and state academic standards. It explains how the school will ensure alignment of its curriculum with the state standards, and the timeline outlining curriculum development during the pre-opening phase, with a full alignment to be completed within one year of opening for each grade level served. This alignment is explicit and not simply assumed because a certain program or model is being used. (Colorado P-12 Academic Standards (CAS) and suggested grade level expectations can be found online at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/GradeLevelBooks.asp>; and more information about how Colorado’s academic standards align with the Common Core State Standards can be found at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas/ccss\\_in\\_the\\_colorado\\_standards.](http://www.cde.state.co.us/contentareas/ccss_in_the_colorado_standards.))
- The application defines how the school will ensure the horizontal alignment of curriculum between classrooms and the vertical alignment of curriculum across grade levels.
- A clear outline of how the school will monitor the implementation of the curriculum is given. At a minimum, this plan should include a course Scope and Sequence for one grade at each school level, and exit standards for each division (e.g. primary, middle school, high school), including alignment with CAS. The plan identifies what resources were used to develop the scope and sequence, and a timeline for further curriculum development, a lead contact and specific action steps to track implementation (e.g. using curriculum mapping as a way for the staff to discuss essential elements such as content/skills, completion of full alignments for all grades, etc.).
- The application provides a clear rationale for the appropriateness of the curriculum for the school’s anticipated population and describes actions the school may take if, upon actual enrollment of students or baseline data is developed, it is determined that adjustments or revisions to the curriculum and/or instructional methodology (see below) are warranted.

#### D.3. Educational Program & Standards: Instruction

This subsection identifies quality instruction that is research-based and has been effective in meeting the needs of the target population. For unique or innovative practices, the team presents a compelling rationale for effectiveness. Instruction is aligned to the educational philosophy.

- As much as possible, the application defines the teaching methods and strategies, and any unique instructional methodologies that will be used to deliver the curriculum described above to the school’s students (e.g. direct instruction, Socratic seminars, lab-based learning, etc.), and why they are the best choice for getting the curriculum across to the target population based on research and aligned to the philosophy, vision and mission of the school. Explanation is given as to how teachers will provide instruction for all student populations to include ELL and Special Education. Cultural relevancy is also addressed. If teachers will be allowed to develop their own instructional methods,

guidelines on how this will be integrated into the program's mission and culture (e.g. teaching writing based on a school-wide rubric, guided reading instruction, etc.) will be explained.

- The application defines the methods and systems the teachers will use, along with student academic performance data, to inform instruction & to differentiate in order to meet the needs of students coming into the school with varying educational backgrounds, abilities and learning styles. At a minimum, these methods should include a brief introduction to and explanation of how the Response to Intervention (RtI) model will be incorporated into the school's instructional program for all students whether for specific or special needs. (See: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/learnaboutrti> and <http://www.rti4success.org/> also see link in Evaluating Pupil Performance.) It is clear how this information will be tracked.. If the school plans to use ability grouping, describe how grouping decisions target the needs of students who require either remediation or acceleration. Describes how teachers will ensure that each student masters content objectives, and develops related skills to demonstrate proficiency across all subjects and standards.
- The application describes classroom culture, the learning environment, class size, and planning tools used to prepare and structure lessons. In essence, this subsection describes how teachers will incorporate common elements in their planning, such as learning objectives, academic vocabulary, essential questions, and differentiated student activities, and provides the reader with a clear picture of what a typical day looks like as the school delivers the specified curricula. (An added description of a day-in-the-life for both a regular and a special needs student may be helpful.)

#### D.4. Educational Program & Standards: Supplemental Programs, Specials or Electives

This subsection describes any unique curricular aspects of the school's program, such as a service-learning, after school programs, clubs, and family programs that are key components of the school.

- The application defines any unique curricular aspects of the school's program, such as a service-learning component, , technology, character education, outdoor education, multicultural education, after school program, electives (during and after school), sports, clubs, etc., and is based on the Colorado Academic Standards when available. Any supplemental programs integral to the curriculum or family programs that are key components of the school are addressed.
- The application clearly defines if the school will offer afterschool or summer school, and describes any program to be offered, the criteria for selection of participants, the times of operation, and how many can attend.
- Ensures chosen programs are aligned to the vision, mission, and educational philosophy, and the curriculum. Any supplemental curriculum and texts, and elective course descriptions are thoroughly described where appropriate, and the research base is provided.
- A plan to fund any supplementary programs is given, along with what the funding information is based on, to include fees (so long as it's done in accordance with applicable Colorado law, including but not limited to the provisions of C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(o) and (p) and 22-32-117, and if they are waived or reduced if students cannot pay), materials, faculty, staff, or partnership organization(s) that will oversee and provide services, etc. (An explanation should be included concerning any additional stipends for volunteer positions. If summer school or other programming is part of the job

expectation, the application clarifies if that work includes a stipend or is part of the annual salary.)

#### D.5. Educational Program & Standards: Professional Development

This sub-section provides a description of the ongoing professional development for faculty and staff, such as individual professional development plans, staff-wide trainings, and the assessment of progress made toward professional performance goals. Professional development aligns with the vision and mission, values and goals of the school, and the implementation of the educational plan.

- The application provides a description of methods the school will use to ensure the ongoing professional development of its faculty and staff, such as individual professional development plans, staff-wide training, and assessment of progress made towards professional performance goals, etc.
- The application defines how the inaugural staff will be trained and prepared to implement the programs prior to the school opening, and includes a list and schedule of critical topics that will be covered to include incorporation of ELL, Special Education and Gifted and Talented into all topics. Further, this subsection explains how, after the first year, the school will support and assimilate teachers new to the school to prepare them to deliver any unique or challenging aspects of curriculum and instruction (regardless of their level of experience in education).
- If the school anticipates that it might hire teachers new to the field of education, the application explains the primary goals and plans of teacher coaching and how the school will support these teachers to ensure that they are successful, and to reinforce the curriculum scope and sequence of the school and ensure that all teachers will have a common understanding of a standards-based teaching and learning cycle.
- The professional development plan identifies a timeline, a lead contact, the specific action steps that will be taken, and how it will be evaluated for effectiveness.
- The application discusses how the budget reflects the school's professional development plan (e.g. a professional development allocation for every staff member, a certain percentage of the annual budget as defined by the board, instructional coaches dedicated to professional development, travel and lodging as needed, etc.).
- The application includes a clear outline of how the school will use information from the curriculum monitoring process to facilitate and adjust professional development and goal setting, and to ensure relevant and differentiated feedback toward continuous improvement in the education program. Essential elements of lesson planning that will be evaluated by the school leader are identified, along with how to address cultural competency and adjust instruction to meet the needs of diverse students.
- Ensures all members of the school team will participate in trainings related to the use of technology in the planned technological aspects of the academic program.
- Identifies the person(s) or organization(s) that will provide professional development and mentoring options to the faculty staff and administration or an identification process of how providers will be selected is included.
- In addition to professional development, strategies are defined for supporting the faculty through mentorship and regular observation, evaluation and feedback, and target goals for retention and building a positive staff culture in order to maintain high faculty retention rates. Description is

provided of methodologies used in a coaching feedback loop to inform instructional planning and practice, and instruments and protocols are research-based. Specifics should also be given as to who will coach and mentor teachers, other members of the leadership team, and the school leader.

- Ensures professional development aligns with the vision, mission, values and goals of the school.

#### D.6. Educational Program & Standards: Structure, Annual Calendar & Daily Schedule

This subsection describes the school's organizational structure which places a priority on implementing the chosen curriculum with fidelity and in its entirety within the confines of an annual calendar and daily schedule, and in compliance with statutory regulations.

- Provides a description of the organizational structure of the school that demonstrates enough support to fully implement the curriculum, and explains how the school will monitor ongoing modifications to the curriculum.
- The application provides narrative around the expected number of days and hours, and a draft of the annual calendar, for the first year of operation, so the authorizer understands the number of proposed student contact days, teacher work, collaborative planning and professional development days, and total hours of instruction in compliance with statutory regulations. This is especially important when the annual calendar differs in any way from the district's calendar.
- The school calendar and daily schedule reflect time allotted for collaborative planning and professional development with expected number of days and hours noted in the narrative. The school's proposed annual calendar and daily schedule reflect the minimum number of hours required by state statute (1,056 hours/yr. for secondary students; 968 hours/yr. for elementary students; no fewer than 160 days per year for all students; (C.R.S. 22-33-104 *et. seq.* and C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(I-II)(A and B)), notes the viability of the curriculum within the provided structure, and notes whether the proposal includes an extended day/year. The total number of days in the year is identified.
- The application includes a draft of both the teachers' and students' daily schedules, for one week of classes, so the authorizer understands the number of hours of instruction per day and week, and can see how the structure of the school day and week, and allocation of time on a daily and weekly basis reflects the school's mission and goals, teacher training, individual planning times, and academic interventions, etc. within the school day.
- The daily schedule reflects adequate time each day in which to implement the intended program(s), and gives the length of the school day with the start and dismissal times, the hours and minutes/day and week dedicated to academic instruction in each grade, and core instructional areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The application narrative explains how the schedule will optimize student learning, and how it supports the goals of the educational program. Adequate time is also provided for required physical education classes and recommended minimum levels of activity of 600 minutes/ month (30 min./school day) for elementary and 225 min./wk. (45 min./school day) for secondary students. (See link under health and wellness/ Curriculum.)

## E. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students \*

This section discusses how the school will address exceptional and educationally disadvantaged student needs. Specific research-based instructional programs, practices and strategies should be employed to produce a continuum of services, that are supported by good assessments, to help ensure academic success for all students. There are many resources available for charter school applicants to consider when writing this section. (Some basic overview information is accessible at <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?page=nsdresources> See also: ESEA: C.R.S. 22-20-101 *et seq.*, and for additional resources see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/sped/index.htm>, and <http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/priority-area/special-education-0>.) Specifically, this section addresses how the school will successfully serve all students' needs.

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

### E.1. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Program Administration

This subsection summarizes the approach, oversight, and design of program(s) to serve exceptional students.

- The application identifies additional supports or programs that will be provided to exceptional students, and describes how the assessments system will enable the school to identify student needs, and how the schedule and use of time will ensure adequate opportunity to support all students' needs.
- The application states how strategies for serving exceptional students *will actually be implemented*. The application specifically identifies the number and type of instructional or other staff that will teach or support exceptional students, as well as services to be provided by contracted service providers.
- The narrative identifies and describes the staff member(s) qualifications to oversee these programs. Licensed Special Education and ELL teachers and other qualified staff are hired to meet the level of service and oversight required to implement the program(s).
- The plan for serving exceptional students aligns with the overall school mission, curriculum, and instructional approach. Professional development needs and financial considerations for these key areas along with staffing and needed materials have been adequately addressed in the budget.

### E.2. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students :Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of students with (IEPs).

- This subsection should address the legal requirements such as IDEA and Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as well as the program design. (42 U.S.C 1401 *et seq.*)
- The plan includes a summary of special education staffing plans, allocation of resources to special

education, student evaluation process and how the students will be identified and assessed through the required system, and the qualifications and role of the special education staff to provide a continuum of services (e.g. pulling students out, and when that will occur if needed vs. training and working with teachers and students in the regular classroom).

- This subsection also includes an explanation of how the school will monitor progress and success of students to know whether it has been successful in meeting these students' needs. The budget adequately reflects funding (at least \$500 average or more per enrolled student – check with the authorizer to determine an accurate amount) allocated to cover special education costs, and a list of the specific services the district is expected to provide.

**Note:** It is strongly recommended that the applicant meet with the district's special education director or a representative from the district's special services department prior to submitting the charter application. The purpose of this meeting is to gain an understanding of how the authorizer views charter schools and the handling of special education issues.

#### E.3. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Response to Intervention (RtI)

This subsection summarizes the school's Response to Intervention (RtI) program and clearly identifies the program components and timelines for student identification.

- Explanation is given of an RtI intervention process and includes specific action steps taken (research-based strategies and applicable learning material examples) and should include the different tiers of the RtI program used by teachers to meet the learning needs of all students. The steps of identification should be provided along with how the school will assess needs and implement supports and interventions, reevaluate through regular progress monitoring, along with the process for entering and exiting the various tiers of the program.
- An administrative lead contact is identified to oversee the program.
- Procedures are in place to avoid misidentification and refer students for evaluation for Special Education services, as applicable. (A Response to Intervention (RtI) approach is designed to specifically intervene when any students are struggling academically so students may not need to be referred for special education assessments, if they respond to earlier interventions. Careful attention should be given to explaining this, what role it plays in Special Education identification, and the process by which final decisions for proper services and placements are made (i.e. Staffing meetings and who attends, etc.) based on a body of evidence.)

**Note:** There has been a shift in RtI Tiers of Intervention to a more focused system of a multi-level layered continuum of supports used within Tiers or Levels of Intervention that looks at both behavior and academic supports, with the idea that students may cross zones. (For more information on RtI visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/LearnAboutRtI.htm>, and [http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/rti/downloads/word/fctk\\_iii\\_ieppartneringwithinrtimodel.doc](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/rti/downloads/word/fctk_iii_ieppartneringwithinrtimodel.doc). Additional information can be found at links in the Instruction and Evaluating Pupil Performance Sections.)

#### E.4. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: English Language Learners



(ELLs)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of ELL students. (C.R.S. 22-24-101 *et. seq.* Those groups that are targeting a community with a significant number of ELL families should give particular focus to this subsection.)

- The applicant has developed a plan for meeting the needs of ELL students based on demographic data and the level of support needed.
- Identifies if the district the applicant is applying to is under court order to provide mandated services for ELL students, and if so, describes the program following the terms of the law.
- The application addresses how the planned curriculum and instructional strategies will be used to meet the needs of ELL students, and refers to any specific English Language Acquisition (ELA) program(s) and what types of supplemental services will be provided within the current curriculum program, along with research-based evidence, how alignment will happen, and how this will support different levels of language development. (Information on the recently adopted World-class Instruction Design and Assessment (WIDA) Standards as the Colorado English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/CoEngLangProf/StateStandards.asp>). In addition, the application reflects an understanding of how ELL students will be evaluated with timely screening to determine whether they qualify for services (e.g. a Home Language Survey, and WIDA ACCESS testing), how often assessment of progress will happen and how the information will be used, how parents will be notified (i.e. home language notifications), how the school will exit students from the program and continue monitoring as necessary, and how the school will know whether it has been successful in meeting ELL students' needs.
- Qualifications and training of staff who will provide the services, how the schedule will be structured to allow adequate time for services during the school day, what resources are being allocated to meet these students' needs, and ongoing training is explained, (For more information on WIDA and Colorado testing requirements see: <http://www.wida.us/> and <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/ELA.asp>).

#### E.5. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Gifted and Talented Students (GT)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of GT students.

- The founding committee addresses how it will differentiate instruction and curriculum to meet the needs of gifted and talented students using research based instructional programs and strategies.
- In addition, this subsection addresses how gifted and talented students will be identified (to include what assessment(s) will be used) and an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) developed, how resources will be allocated to include materials, time, qualified staff and training, and funds to meet the needs of these students, how the school will improve representation of under-represented groups, and how the school will know whether it has been successful in meeting GT students' needs (See: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/resources>.)

#### E.6. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: At-Risk Students

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of At-Risk students.

- Students with 504 Plans. The school addresses how 504 plans will be prepared and evaluated to ensure that students' needs are being met. (29 U.S.C. 794)
- Economically disadvantaged and homeless students. This is primarily determined by whether students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program, and can also refer to "neglected or delinquent students" as defined by the federal program. Applicants have addressed how they will meet the unique needs of these students, including their physical needs (providing food services, waiving student fees, providing uniforms, addressing transportation needs, etc.). This subsection also includes an explanation of how the school will know whether it has been successful in meeting these students' needs, and any specific interventions that will be used to help close the achievement gap.
- Low performing students. The school will undoubtedly attract students who enter below grade level. The application should include some thoughtful, realistic strategies, based on local district's school performance data, for bringing these students up to grade level and ensuring their success in the school. These strategies must be compatible with proposed staffing structures and budgetary restrictions. High School proposals should address students at risk of dropping out (C.R.S. 22-30.5-523) or not on target to meet graduation requirements.
- Students with physical disabilities. The application acknowledges a commitment to finding a facility that is American's with Disabilities Act compliant (or renovating to ensure ADA compliance) and to providing any physical/occupational therapy as required by a student's IEP. (42 U.S.C. 12101)

## F. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension

This section defines how the school intends to handle student discipline and establish a student culture in which all students are able to learn. Refer to C.R.S. 22-33-105 and 106 *et seq.*, and C.R.S. 22-33-203, the Suspension, Expulsion and Denial of Admission law, for more detailed information. Also see school bullying policy requirements at C.R.S. 22-30.5-116 and C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(1)(b). Further detail is provided in a publication prepared by the Attorney General's office:

[http://www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/violence\\_prevention/svpm2008.pdf](http://www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/violence_prevention/svpm2008.pdf).

- A proposed discipline policy and procedures, that reflect school culture and include definitions of terms and major and minor levels of infraction, is provided. A timeline for development or a draft discipline manual is included in either the application or the appendices, respectively.
- Expulsion or Dismissal procedures and due process rights for students and parents/guardians are addressed. This will also include a process for appealing an expulsion decision, and how a student will be removed from the school and for what offenses. If there are other district schools that an expelled student would be prohibited from attending, these should be noted in the application.
- A description of steps the school will take to develop a positive student culture, and address strategies for positive support, thereby reducing the number of disciplinary infractions and reliance on negative consequences, is given. Description is also given as to how these are practiced in the

classroom to reinforce student intellectual and social development, and ensure students are on task with their focus on learning. (See link on PBIS for ideas on how positive support can be integrated into the program: [PBIS-Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Webinar Recording](#).)

- An explanation of how disciplinary expectations will be communicated to parents/guardians and students is included, and addresses state statutory requirements, policies, processes, rituals and protocols of school culture, and how systems, practices, and traditions will be in place from the first day.
- A draft discipline policy and procedures manual is consistent with the intent and purpose of C.R.S22-33-106.
- A description is given of how the school will handle discipline for students with disabilities to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and 504 regulations to include Manifestation Hearings and Behavior Plans as appropriate. (20 U.S.C 1415(k), and 34 C.F.R. 519-529)
- Information is given as to the person responsible for implementation of discipline policies, and entering discipline data in the SIS, progress monitoring and reporting.
- An explanation of how the charter school will provide the expelled student with an alternative education is provided, if applicable.
- Explanation is given as to how the school will ensure minorities and disabled students are not disproportionately represented in disciplinary matters, and how cultural considerations and disability related needs will be taken into consideration with staff training and implementation practices described.

**Note:** It is strongly recommended that the applicant meet with someone who handles discipline at the district level prior to submitting the charter application in order to gauge how the authorizer views charter schools and discipline issues. The founding committee should ensure that discipline plans are in compliance with statutory requirements and district policy. If not, ensure that an appropriate state or district waiver is being sought to allow for flexibility in implementing student discipline and that an appropriate replacement policy and plan are well-defined. C.R.S. 22-33-105(7) states that a charter school authorized by CSI may suspend, and CSI itself, may carry out the function of a school district and expel, suspend or deny admission of students to a CSI school.

## G. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance \*

This section expands on the goals section earlier in the application by defining how the school will determine whether it is meeting its goals, and its plan for administering statewide assessments consistent with C.R.S. 22-7-406-409. It focuses both on internal assessments used to drive instructional decision-making, as well as external assessments used to communicate academic achievement and growth to stakeholders. A quality assessment plan will include summative (end-of-year) assessments, as well as interim (more frequent, end of unit or assessments used formatively) and formative (daily and weekly checks for understanding) assessments to track student skill and knowledge development. The plan will include how this data will be used to guide professional development of teachers as well as how

this data will be used to guide refinement of the curriculum and instruction. Be aware that all Colorado public schools including charter schools are subject to the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS, which include the Colorado Summative Assessments of Science and Social Studies and the PARCC Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments) that serve as the state assessments associated with the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), and the Colorado ACT (CO ACT) for High School Juniors. (See the CDE website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment> for detailed information regarding these programs.)

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

#### G.1. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Assessments

This subsection describes the types of appropriate internal school level assessments the school will use to evaluate both student needs and the effectiveness of the academic programs, and external assessments that will be used to measure student performance, and comply with district and state requirements to ensure content standards will be met

- The application defines how the school will gather baseline data (meaning local assessments) on all incoming students so that the school has immediate information in placing students in appropriate levels and can accurately monitor their growth. (It is recommended that all schools administer a standardized test at the start of the school's first year to all students and additionally throughout the year. This ensures that baseline data is available to determine progress made by students during the first year rather than having to wait until the end of the second year when the school would have state student achievement data for two consecutive years).
- The application provides a sample testing schedule/timeline and describes a comprehensive list of what school-level assessments will be used in addition to CMAS, ACT, and ACCESS for ELLs (C.R.S. 22-7-406-409 *et.al.*), and when they will each be administered. The application also explains the use of school performance based (PBA) and end-of-year (EOY) PARCC assessments for grades 3-8 and high school. ( See: <http://parcconline.org/assessment-system>.)

**Note:** These evaluation methods align with the school's goals outlined in the Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Performance Standards section. For example, if the school has a goal on the percentage of students reading on grade level by the end of each academic year, then there must be an assessment tool included to provide at established interval leading up to the PARCC English Language Arts assessment, so that the school can ensure students are making progress toward and on track to be classified as having strong command or distinguished command on the PARCC assessment in the Spring. The school has chosen assessments that will provide useful data for the school, rather than just using assessments for the sake of using assessments. Both interim and summative assessments should be identified (or timelines to identify them should be included along with the process to determine what assessments to use), to show sufficient frequency of assessments without over-testing. A recommended minimum testing interval should be three times/year for interim assessments.

- The application defines what assessments will be used for literacy testing in order to comply with the

Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act), which mandates that students are to be reading on grade level by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. It explains how this data will be used to complete and monitor READ Plans. (See the Colorado READ Act for more details: (C.R.S. 22-7-1201 *et. seq.*) or <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/ReadAct/index.asp>.) It also explains how the school will assess kindergarteners (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/kindergarten>) and provide a school readiness plan.

**Note:** SB 08-212, Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K) indicates that local education providers are required to ensure all children in publicly-funded preschool or kindergarten receive an individual school readiness plan. The legislation does not specify the contents of school readiness plans except that the plans need to be informed by the school readiness assessment.

- A description should be given as to how the school will know the formative assessments are aligned to curriculum, the vision and mission, instruction, and are valid and reliable indicators of the effectiveness of interventions and performance goals and state standards. Research to support the school’s evaluation process is included in the appendices.
- Identified school-level and state assessments demonstrate that the school understands and intends to comply with the Colorado accreditation requirements as articulated in the Colorado School Performance Framework. (For information on Accountability see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability>, and the four Performance Indicators, see section 2 of the Rules for Administration of Statewide Accountability Measures (1 CCR 301-1), at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/accountability/downloads/1ccr301-1-june2012.pdf>. It will also be important to ask the authorizer for information about their accreditation contract, process, and timeline.
- Identified school-level and state assessments comply with the authorizer’s methods for determining whether the school has met the federal mandates of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) such as adequate growth as defined by the Colorado Growth Model. (Additional information may be found at <http://www.schoolview.org/ColoradoGrowthModel2.asp>, [http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/sb\\_163\\_052013](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/sb_163_052013), and <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/federalaccountability> )

#### G.2. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Data Management & Data Support for Teachers

This subsection describes the school’s chosen data warehouse system and how it will utilize data to inform and modify curriculum and instruction, professional development, course completion and grade-level advancement.

- Ensures the three parts of a performance management system are in place. The school has created a performance management plan including how they will utilize the three “systems”: 1. Student Information System (SIS) 2. Interim/Formative/Summative Assessments 3. Data Management System (a data warehouse or process) to capture and effectively manage student and school level data. This subsection provides a summary of the full plan, and more extensive information can be included in an appendix as needed. The plan identifies what other tools and resources will be used for data

management purposes, such as an internal database, data management service, dedicated staff who will manage the process, etc.

- This subsection explains how budget resources have been adequately allocated to support staffing, system start-up, and ongoing implementation costs. The narrative also contains a timeline with the lead contact and details for performance management system acquisition and implementation.
- Provides a detailed description of how the school will use internal assessments, including formative, interim, and summative assessments to ensure that each student is making progress towards both short- and long-term goals, and explains how formative assessment data will be used to inform instruction. The application describes the types of assessments that will primarily be used at the school, such as tests, projects, essays, portfolios, and how these align with the mission and clearly defined academic goals.
- The application explains how the school will collect, analyze, triangulate, and manage data on an ongoing basis. The performance management plan includes specific action steps that will be taken to utilize data and support teachers in the analysis of evaluating data in order to help them clearly inform their instruction and differentiate based on what the data says. The student assessment information monitoring is also used to facilitate continuous improvement in the school's entire educational program, and professional development planning. Performance management planning documents are available on the League website [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/coloradoleague.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/files-pm/critical\\_components\\_pm\\_progr.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/coloradoleague.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/files-pm/critical_components_pm_progr.pdf), and additional support in developing a performance management plan is available upon request.
- The application explains how the school will use longitudinal data analysis to measure its success, frequency of assessments, and what systems will be put in place to allow teachers to regularly analyze and collaborate around useful data in order to drive instruction. The authors have listed the assessments to which the school will apply school level and student level growth data to measure success. For example, using Colorado's Growth Model, one can set reasonable, but attainable student level growth targets around performance. (For more information, visit see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/growthmodeltutorials> and [http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip\\_trainingandsupport\\_resources](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_trainingandsupport_resources) For help with goals see the Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Performance Standards section above.)
- In compliance with C.R.S. 22-30.5-106(f), the application provides a description of the charter school's trigger points for intervention based on goals, and procedures for taking corrective action in the event that pupil performance at the charter school falls below the achievement goals approved by the authorizer in the charter contract to include many examples of interventions and specific action steps. This includes information on how the school will schedule additional supports. (Such as a Response to Intervention (RtI) model, which includes a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and assessments focusing on labeling each area of need and needed supports instead of labeling students, and is explained well in a webinar located at: [MTSS-Multi-Tiered System of Supports-Session 1 Webinar Recording](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/rti/downloads/pdf/guidebook_rtirubrics.pdf). An Implementation Rubrics Guidebook is available at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/rti/downloads/pdf/guidebook\\_rtirubrics.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/rti/downloads/pdf/guidebook_rtirubrics.pdf).)

### G.3. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Performance Standards

This subsection describes the student performance standards and how the standards are used to advance academic performance.

- The application defines how the school will communicate individual student progress to parents and guardians, and what that progress is based on (i.e.: grading scale and report card examples, portfolios with rubric examples, promotion and exit standards for each grade level, etc.). This information includes graduation and course pass requirements. If the school does not plan to use traditional grades, the application explains what alternative methods will be used to record and communicate individual academic success to families, and includes a sample rubric in the appendices. This subsection also describes parent/teacher conferencing requirements.
- Clearly describes a plan to monitor progress toward meeting school goals and includes a description of how it will use data to inform modification and improvement processes.
- The application provides information on how the school will annually review and report its assessment data and academic success to the parent community, the broader community, and the school district. The narrative addresses implementation of an annual Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) as part of the Accountability process. (See guidance for new schools in developing a UIP: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/SupplementalGuidance\\_NewSchools\\_2013.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/SupplementalGuidance_NewSchools_2013.pdf), and general information about the UIP process at: <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?uiresources>, and [http://www.cde.state.co.us/ui/ui\\_trainingandsupport\\_resources](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ui/ui_trainingandsupport_resources).)
- The application identifies trigger points for intervention and procedures for taking corrective action if student performance at the school falls below the described targets.

## H. Enrollment Policy & Outreach

This section explains how students who want to attend the school will be recruited, admitted and enrolled, and how the school will manage the process

- Includes an enrollment policy and lottery policy and procedures, or description is included which specifies that enrollment is available to all students without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, or need for special education services. It is important to distinguish between admission decisions and academic placement decisions. The Colorado Charter Schools Act (C.R.S. 22-30.5-104 (3) and 507(3)) prohibits discrimination based on academic ability.
  - The policy specifies any other priority enrollment groups, such as children of founders and staff members (in which case “founders” also need to be defined), siblings (this group can be given preference outside the lottery), and students seeking to change schools under the public school choice provisions of ESEA Title I. Priority seats for children of founders and staff may not exceed 20 %\* of the school’s total population.
  - New federal CSP grant standards now allow for weighted lotteries\* to address specific areas

- for “educationally disadvantaged” students and other designated federal programs as defined by the federal CSP program.
- The policy specifies whether enrollment will be determined by waitlist or lottery in the case that the school is oversubscribed.
- Application and enrollment procedures include when open enrollment happens, when the lottery takes place and the annual deadline for enrollment (if the school has one).
- Note:** It should be noted that charter schools cannot set enrollment criteria for admission (e.g. academic, audition, etc.). Once enrolled, charters can test students to determine their academic knowledge. (As such, it is important to distinguish between admission decisions and academic placement decisions.) Information may also be included as to how the lottery works (e.g. computer, bingo numbers, etc.)
- A plan is included on how the community received information about the formation of a new charter school, and as part of an ongoing marketing plan. There are indications of a sound plan for outreach to a diverse population, that includes the at-risk and under-served populations and those not likely to hear about the school, and a timeline, action steps, and a specific recruitment contact person are provided.
- Describes the types of outreach the founding committee has already conducted to make the student population and their families aware of the proposed charter school. Means of outreach should be diverse and designed to reach all students in the community, thereby ensuring equal access. Applicants describe strong, diverse outreach strategies to engage all parents equally to include strategies such as community meetings, mailings, posters, door-to-door recruitment efforts, media advertising, etc.
- Includes a detailed description of future outreach steps the founding committee intends to take and events or venues where this will happen both before and after approval. Addresses milestones that will demonstrate progress and expected enrollment prior to opening, and how these methods will reach all members of the community (bilingual fliers which can be included in the appendices, translators, and outreach locations to connect with diverse populations, etc.). Provides equal opportunity for students to enroll including at-risk, low achieving, disabled, and linguistically diverse students.
- References a sample Intent to Enroll form (which is included as an appendix) that has been used to gauge parent and student interest in the school. The Intent to Enroll form requests detailed information about the student(s) who intend to enroll in order to address authorizer questions about the anticipated student population, while still assuring families of non-discrimination. For example, forms should include a non-discrimination statement and assurance that there are no criteria for enrollment. If there are concerns, questions such as socioeconomic level, special needs, and race could be gathered on a separate anonymous form that doesn’t request a name, in order to gather data but not give the impression of bias in enrollment decisions.
- The means by which the school will track Intent to Enroll forms and manage the applicant pool includes how communication will take place and who will be responsible for this. Information is given concerning what happens to the names not drawn in the lottery.
- Describes a non-discriminatory enrollment procedure that ensures equal access for exceptional and



educationally disadvantaged students.

- Notification procedures of placement and how long parents have to make a decision to accept or decline a seat are provided.
- The contents of the enrollment packet, which a parent/guardian fills out once a student has been admitted to the school, are described. This reflects an understanding of the types of documentation the district requires for safety, medical, legal and financial purposes. The school should commit to having all student files set up prior to the school's opening.
- Any requirements of parents to reaffirm intent to enroll on an annual basis and the procedure to do so are provided. Anticipated changes to the outreach and recruiting plan, after year one, are explained along with target reenrollment information.
- A clear process (or plan for developing a process) is in place for withdrawals and transfers of student records to support the transition of existing students from one school to another.

**Note:** The school's enrollment policy must be in compliance with federal guidelines if the school wants to receive federal start-up funding through the CSP grant\*. *For the purpose of this guidance, educationally disadvantaged students are students in the categories described in section 1115(b)(2) of the ESEA, which includes students who are economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, migrant students, limited English proficient students, neglected or delinquent students, and homeless students.* The founding committee may want to have the CDE Schools of Choice Office review the enrollment policy for compliance prior to submitting the charter application. (See the RFP and Guidebook for the CCSP grant at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/cchgrn00.htm>, and also the U.S. Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance: Title V, Part B, Charter Schools Program at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/nonregguidance.htm>.)

## I. Governance \*

This section provides detailed information on the governance philosophy and how the board will approach the oversight role, the role and make-up of the board and the role of the school's administration in carrying out the school's vision and mission and meeting its goals. Charter school governance is extremely important to the success of a charter school. There should be clear information given as to the founding committee or board and how this group will transition to an official governing board. Also, the chief administrator's responsibilities should be stated. The number of directors on an official charter school board should not be less than five and it's generally considered a best practice to have no more than nine directors. (Many sample best practice documents for charter school governing boards are available online at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/index.htm> including information on the Open Meetings and Open Records laws located part way down the page at this link. Also see: Colorado Code of Ethics: (24-18-101 *et seq.*)

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the

applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

#### I.1. Governance: Governing Board

This subsection provides detailed information on the governance philosophy, and board make-up.

- A description should be given as to how the vision and mission will be brought to fruition in everyday practice and decision making.
- The application includes a definition of who can serve on the board (parents, community members, etc.). The application also defines who will be targeted for board participation, and how highly qualified board members are recruited, selected and trained. Consideration should be given to areas of expertise that are needed in order to open the school, when adding new members.
- A description of the composition of the governing board and number of members is included. The board represents the diversity of the school, which represents the diversity of the larger community. The board also represents a diversity of skill sets (e.g. people with legal, financial, governance, education, fundraising, etc. expertise). The narrative explains how the composition will ensure educational and operational success, and involvement with both the target population and key stakeholders. The application defines what the school's ideal governing board would look like. If this does not match the current composition of the governing board, a plan for soliciting board participation in order to accomplish this vision is defined.
- A plan for ongoing comprehensive board training and capacity building is noted as to when or included in a board calendar, and includes both annual board training in vital subjects to include Open Meetings and Open Records laws, for new board members, and how the board will expand and develop over time. (Online Board Training Modules can be accessed free at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/techassistance> with direct log-in at: <http://onlinelearning.enetcolorado.org/login/>. Information for signing up for the modules can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/accessguide>.)
- The application includes a description of any ongoing committees that will be put into place and their roles, along with a plan for meaningful involvement of parents and community members in the governance of the school.
- If a governing board has already been appointed, information is provided on how that process took place. If the initial governing board will be elected or appointed following charter approval, a description is provided of that planned process, and includes a timeline. Information about the school's founding committee, in the form of [short] bios, should be included in this section. The bios should explain the expertise each member brings to the founding team for developing the school. A list of individuals making the transition to the official board should be provided, along with when they will be seated and assume responsibility for school governance. Resumes of the developing team and/or the founding board, whichever is applicable, are included in the appendices.
- Information should also be provided to address how decisions will be made and recorded prior to authorization.
- The application offers an explanation of any non-traditional governance structures, such as an all-parent board, staff members serving on the board, the lead administrator serving on the board, (It is not considered Best Practice to have employees serve as voting board members), etc. The narrative

explains rationale and legal -expertise that has been sought in developing the structure, and how any potential conflicts of interest will be avoided on a non-traditional board.

- There is evidence the board will conduct an annual self-evaluation and a program effectiveness review, and use the results to identify areas of needed growth and determine ongoing professional development.

## I.2. Governance: Legal Status & Governing Documents

This subsection describes the legal status of the school and the status of the completion of state statute requirements, school By-Laws, and Articles of Incorporation and policies. Policies and procedures are defined and align to the vision and mission of the school and support student achievement.

- This subsection includes a summary of the school's proposed or approved by-laws, which should be included as an appendix. An explanation should be given as to who was consulted during the development of bylaws appropriate to the structure of the organization. In this subsection of the application, the founding committee highlights key features of the school's governance model as set forth in the by-laws. Specifically, the school addresses in the bylaws the board's powers and duties, how board members are elected or appointed, when elections or appointments take place and who can vote, who can serve on the school's board, the length of board terms, whether there are term limits, how many directors serve on the board and what the minimum number of directors is, what constitutes a quorum and how decisions are made, a summary of board officers and their roles, how members can be removed, how vacancies will be filled, how often the board will meet, and attendance requirements.
- This subsection should also explain the school's status as a non-profit organization and include a copy of the Articles of Incorporation and letter of non-profit status, if available, and a plan for filing as a non-profit organization, which is required for all charter schools. (Non-Profit Corporation Act: C.R.S. 7-121-101 *et seq.*) Explains if the school will be a member or non-member corporation, and who the members will be if applicable.
- The application includes a description of steps the school will take to remain in compliance with the Open Meetings Act (C.R.S. 24-6-401 *et seq.*)
- The application includes a description of steps the school will take to remain in compliance with the Colorado Public Records Act (C.R.S. 24-72-201 *et seq.*)
- The application includes a description of steps the school will take to remain in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232).
- A detailed description of the responsibilities of the school's accountability committee and its role in relation to the school's governing board and administration is included. This subsection demonstrates that the applicant thoroughly understands statutory guidance on School Accountability Committees with regard to its makeup and duties, and commits to forming such a committee upon the school's opening to include recruiting, scheduling meetings and the role of the staff (this is an area where the school may not request a waiver. (C.R.S. 22-11-401 to 406) For additional information and for sample SAC Committee documents see: <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?page=nsdresources>)
- This subsection includes a list of the school's primary governance and operational policies that the

board has either already adopted or will adopt prior to the school's opening, as well as additional policies, such as a board member agreement, needed to ensure the sound governance and operations of the school. All policies and procedures are aligned to the vision and mission of the school and support student achievement. The basic premise of these policies should be explained in the narrative along with either an explanation of how and when the founding board will develop and adopt a full set of policies, or a draft copy of the initial board policies should be included in the appendices.

- The application contains a draft or final conflict of interest policy and a policy for hearing parent, staff and student grievances. These policies are clear, show how conflicts of interest will be handled, and follow an appropriate route for delineating how grievances will be addressed for resolution of concerns that are raised. Among other things, the conflict of interest policy should address potential nepotism, employees serving on governing boards, and self-dealing. (See Colorado non-profit law for Conflict of Interest requirements.) It is also highly recommended, as a best practice and if the school obtains a 501c3 exemption, that the Bylaws or policies of the school include a requirement that each charter board member sign a Board Member Agreement, and annually sign a conflict of interest disclosure. (See: Sample Contract Language Attachment 4.) (See: Sample Contract Language Attachment 4 <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/distauthinfo>) Include example forms in the appendices.

### I.3. Governance: Oversight of Operations

This subsection focuses on the roles and responsibilities of the board and lead administrator. It also focuses on the process to hire a school leader that is skilled and aligned to the schools vision and mission, and provides the qualities and qualifications this person must have to effectively run a school and lead the faculty and staff. It also addresses the process of board oversight and evaluation of administration, achievement, and finance.

#### School Administration:

- Describes the board's and the administration's primary responsibilities, and demonstrates a thorough and clear understanding of the differences in roles and responsibilities. It is essential that the difference between the roles and responsibilities of the board and administration are well thought out and articulated.
- The application provides detail of how the transition of leadership (from the founding committee and/or board to the school administration and a formal operating board) will take place following school approval to allow for a smooth shift of responsibility.

**Note:** This is a typical point of tension in operating schools and the more this can be defined in advance of hiring a school leader, the better. To better understand these differences, the League recommends that founding committees do substantial research into successful governance models and obtain governance training. While it is expected that the board will take on some functions of management prior to the school leader's hire and even during initial start-up, the board should understand its role in governing the school, not in managing or operating it on a day-to-day basis.

- Presents an organizational plan that clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for implementing the school's program successfully. It clearly defines the board's role on committees, and the relationship between the board, the lead administrator, and committees or advisory groups, and explains how the board will interact with and will evaluate the school leader.
- The narrative includes a detailed and rigorous process to locate, interview and hire the school leader six months to a year before school opens, and includes a timeline and financial considerations. A job description is attached in the Appendix, and included duties, minimum education and experience level needed, and supervisory relationship information.

**Note:** If the group gets a charter contract, then hires a school leader or CEO type, then they need to comply with CRS 24-6-402(3.5) The provision states that a search committee shall establish job search goals, draft a job description, and establish deadlines for applications, requirements for applicants, selection procedures, and the time frame for employing the CEO. The school must make public the list of all finalists under consideration for the position no later than fourteen days prior to employing one of the finalists to fill the position. No offer of appointment or employment shall be made prior to this public notice.

- The narrative should include a profile description of the school's ideal leader including skills, qualifications and characteristics, and how the identified qualifications will help the school meet its goals. It is expected the school leader will be experienced with the target student population, leading a school or team, developing and sustaining community and parent relations, and distributing leadership among its faculty. A resume should be included if a school leader is already identified.
- Describes a system for how and when the board will evaluate the school leader and use this information to analyze the leader's need for coaching and professional development, and then supply needed supports is included along with the evaluation tool that will be used. (See: C.R.S. 22-9-106 which should either be met or a replacement plan included if waived.)

#### General:

- Ensures an internal and external evaluation plan is in place. Information should include how the board will regularly monitor key financial, student achievement and school culture information, with clear protocols for receiving metrics and progress indicators in the form of a dashboard or similar reporting format. (See dashboard examples at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/index.htm>)
- Financial resources are in place to support board transition and administrative hiring plans, as well as board training, legal document and policy development, internal and external evaluations, and self-evaluation needs.
- Describes the Board oversight of the budget process and the statutory approval timeline is addressed in accordance with C.R.S. 22-44-110 *et.seq.* & 22-30.5-111.7(1)(a).

## J. Evidence of Support \*

The Evidence of Support section of the application provides the authorizer with detail on the student population to be served, how many parents have expressed interest in the school by submitting Letters of Intent to Enroll, and what other community support exists for the school. Specifically, this section includes:

- Includes detailed information about the proposed school's student body and how the decision was made to serve that population, and an identified region being proposed. This section reflects that the applicant has conducted and included sufficient research, that is reasonable given publicly available demographic information, into the student population to understand their needs, educational values, and area demographics (including racial/cultural, socioeconomic, special needs, and ELL breakdown), and achievement data for the proposed school's area. The remainder of the application reflects this understanding of the student population through a program designed specifically to meet these students' needs.
- Includes a summary of the number of families who have expressed interest in the proposed school through signing Intent to Enroll Forms. The forms themselves should not be submitted with the application, but should instead be summarized. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-106(3)) The summary of information includes the anticipated demographic characteristics in the area of the students expected to enroll, as well as information describing from where they anticipate their students will come (school district, what school would otherwise be attended (neighborhood public, private, charter), number/grade level, specific neighborhood, etc.) Evidence must show that an adequate number of parents and pupils support the formation of this charter school. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-106(1)(d))
- Demonstrates research regarding number of new schools opening in the area and adjusts enrollment projections accordingly.
- Includes information about community members and leaders who have stepped forward in support of the school. Letters of Support should be included in the appendices whenever possible.

## K. Parent & Community Involvement

This section is designed to address the roles parents/guardians, community members, and community organizations will play as part of the school community.

- Provides an overview of how parents will be or have been involved in the charter application process and how this involvement will carry over once the school is opened, and includes strong evidence to demonstrate parent/guardian and community involvement in all phases of the school's development.
- The application explains how family-school partnerships will be built and explains the parent/guardian engagement plan that provides opportunities for parents to partner with the school to strengthen and support student learning, school culture and operations.

- Information is given about how community organizations will be involved with the school or how the school's students will be involved with community organizations. Any existing or planned relationships with outside organizations should be described to include planned partnerships, the services that will be provided and the anticipated or actual agreement(s). These can be provided in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Letter of Intent (LOI) that explains the nature, purpose, terms and scope of service. The narrative should include how the school is welcomed by the larger community and how the school reflects the community needs and interests, and Letters of Support should be included in the appendix. The application describes how the school will continue to develop additional partnerships as it matures.
- A description of the parent/guardian volunteer requirement, if one exists, is included. If the school does plan to have such a requirement, it is important to note that this is an expectation, rather than an enforced requirement with any type of punitive consequence for families not fulfilling their hours. For example, the school cannot restrict enrollment only to families who serve a certain number of volunteer hours.
- Detail is provided about the types of roles parent/guardian and community volunteers will serve within the school, such as serving as board members, front office support, teacher support in the classroom, clerical support (photocopying, stuffing folders, etc.), committee roles, event organizers, etc. Any specific parent involvement plans or activities are provided, along with any applicable research basis.
- Establishes communication pathways and strategies to make timely school information accessible to all potential and involved families including those at-risk.
- Describes a method for assessing parent/guardian satisfaction, such as through a survey, along with the person(s) responsible for the survey, increasing participation and a timeline is included for making adjustments based on results.

## L. Budget & Finance \*

This is a substantive, and important section of the application that details the school's budget, the school's plans for an independent governmental financial audit, and other aspects of the school's fiscal management. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-112.2 & 513(4.5) for definitions for at-risk supplemental aid, and C.R.S. 22-30.5-111.5 & 513.5 for funding definitions.) The CDE requirements for financial management and reporting are available in the Financial Policies and Procedures manual at [www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/sfFPP.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/sfFPP.htm). Also note that schools may form a consortium (C.R.S. 22-30.5-507(12)). An additional resource with general information is the Colorado Charter School Financial Management Guide located at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/cdechart/guidebook/fin/pdf/financeguide.pdf> though schools should also consider any updated information found on the CDE Public School Finance website at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance>. The budget shall be prepared in accordance with

C.R.S. 22-30.5-111.7(1)(a) and C.R.S. 22-30.5-112(7) and the state-mandated chart of accounts.

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

#### L.1. Budget & Finance: Budget Narrative

This subsection provides a financial narrative of the 5 Year school budget that includes a description of the school start-up plan, in alignment to its vision and mission,, services and specific programming for both the academic and non-academic program, and any other areas of service that are unique to the school model.

- This subsection includes a complete summary of the budget, including all major revenue and expense items, and should also indicate that the school plans to use conservative budgeting. Includes statutory required areas of PERA, TABOR and Worker's Compensation. The summary and budget both reflect the minimum enrollment needed for solvency. (Pupil enrollment count day occurs on October 1 each year. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-103(6.6) and 502(9.5)). The narrative clearly explains how assumptions have been obtained from reliable sources.

**Note:** The summary reflects that the school has reviewed several operating charter schools' budgets and understands the reality of revenues and expenses within the school district and the larger market. Specifically, on the revenue side, the school has gathered and used accurate information for projected per pupil revenue (PPR) shall be defined as set forth in C.R.S. 22-30.5-112(2)(a.5), mill levy funds, title funds, etc. (The School shall not charge tuition, except as otherwise provided in C.R.S. 22-20-109(5), C.R.S. 22-32-115(1) and (2) and C.R.S. 22-54-109, other than for PRE-K, full-day kindergarten programs, before and after school programs or as otherwise permitted by law.) On the expense side, the school has gathered and used information that reflects district administrative costs, and reconciliation at the end of each year (C.R.S. 22-30.5-111.7), or CSI administrative overhead costs (C.R.S. 22-30.5-506(4)), competitive salaries, benefits, a plan for making accurate retirement contributions (see the PERA website at [www.copera.org](http://www.copera.org) or the specific payment information located at <https://www.copera.org/employers/employer-contribution-rates>) special education costs as required by the authorizer, professional development expenses based on the proposed professional development plan, data management services, assessments, legal fees, audit costs, average market lease rates and associated facility costs, commercial insurance premiums, curriculum expenses, furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) to supply a fully operating school building, start-up and replacement costs, and costs associated with any special school focus or emphasis, etc.

- The budget narrative includes a basic start-up plan (facilities funding, FFE and materials acquisition), the curriculum and professional development plan, and the school growth plan. The growth plan should include student count and needed staffing projections that fit the educational narrative, along with adequate financial allocations and anticipated timelines that all of these will be in place. There is an adequate and reasonable plan to manage start-up costs without complete dependence on federal or private grant funds.
- Budget is maximized to meet the vision and mission and the programs described in each section of



the application.

- Ensures projected student population growth is adequate to meet long range plans for the chosen school model, staffing and facility needs. Projections are conservative and are based on realistic data.
- A plan is in place to address funding shortfalls that might occur if the school is under-enrolled. Because public schools cannot run a deficit budget, the developers should reference a contingency budget that addresses this scenario and is included as an appendix. For the contingency summary and budget, at a minimum, the planned cuts should be noted in the narrative and should reflect what happens if 100% of the expected enrollment or PPR is not achieved.
- Explains the school's understanding of financial implications of employment law and operations and has planned for funds to be in place regarding tax, payroll, retirement, insurance and background check requirements.

#### L.2. Budget & Finance: 5 Year Budget

The budget is submitted as an Appendix to the application. The five year budget is balanced, follows district and specific statutory requirements, and adheres to the Authorizer's budget template guidelines.

- Includes a five-year balanced budget that is included as an appendix in the application that aligns with the growth plans as described in each section of the application. The budget reflects a separate realistic cash flow projection for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of operation. (A cash flow statement accurately reflects the timing of income and expenses in order to help the school manage possible cash shortfalls.) The budget also reflects an understanding of specific statutory requirements, including the ability to track federal, state and foundation grant funding income and expense by grant code (e.g. any income from categorical or special funds (e.g. Title I, CCSP grant, etc.), is clearly shown as separate in a column reflecting expenditures for that area, and includes known expenses (such as the CSSI visit costs for CCSP grant recipients.)
- The budget has the required PERA contributions and 3% TABOR reserve each year. The attached budget includes an assumptions sheet that shows income and expense projections/or quotes that are realistic, and assumptions are based on the best possible sources (e.g. per pupil revenue (PPR) at 100% of the district's PPR except for small attendance areas (C.R.S. 22-30.5-112) for the estimated number of students, with Kindergarten students figured at .58 of the per pupil amount, (C.R.S. 22-30.5-112(2)(c)(III); 112.1(3)(c); and 513(2)(b.5), an explanation of how the school will reach enrollment goals, estimated number of students eligible for FRL, per pupil costs of other charters schools in the district, insurance quotes from the district and another company, etc.)
- Demonstrates an understanding of financial implications of employment law and operations and has funds in place regarding tax, payroll, retirement, insurance and background check requirements.
- The budget fully demonstrates an awareness of needs and a plan and resources for available cash on hand prior to school opening and the receipt of reimbursement grants
- The budget is set up in such a way that it is most useful to the school's board and leadership for making effective short and long term decisions, and reflects an understanding of the Colorado Department of Education's Chart of Accounts. The working budget should be easily cross-walked to the required CDE chart of accounts budget, and the financial information should be accurately

translated into the year-end district-negotiated format for the Automatic Data Exchange (ADE) trial balance. Preschool tuition and funds are not co-mingled with state and federal K-12 funds, where public funds would be paying for the program, except for income and expenses for qualifying students for which the school receives state aid. Expenditures are clearly noted as coming from the appropriate funding category or area. (For example, just as a column for Title I shows allowable areas where the funds are used, in that program, and the fund zeroes out at the end of the year, a column for preschool should show where expenses are covered using tuition-based funding.)

- The budget does not include any “soft funds,” such as unknown foundational funding or contributions; it includes only grants or donations that have already been received or for which commitments have been received. Evidence is provided for anticipated fundraising and grants, if cited in the application.
- The proposed budget balances each year and includes a 5 year plan to reach at least a 5 percent reserve (in addition to the TABOR reserve) that the school can use for emergency purposes or as a long-term reserve. The budget demonstrates that expenditures will not exceed available funds.

### L.3. Budget & Finance: Systems & Procedures

This subsection focuses on the systems and procedures in place to ensure the school and Board follow sound financial practices to make sure their school is financially stable and funds are appropriately used to support the vision and mission of the school.

- The narrative should indicate that the school will meet district budget reporting requirements throughout the year (which will be negotiated with the district after charter approval. The School shall prepare quarterly financial reports for the District in compliance with C.R.S. 22-45-102(l)(b)), the Financial Transparency Act (that requires finance information to be posted on the school’s website), and that the budget will be finalized each year by the January 31<sup>st</sup> CDE chart of accounts budget submission deadline. (See: Financial Transparency Act: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/sfFinancialTransparency.htm>).
- The application describes the process the school will follow to contract with a Certified Public Accountant to conduct an annual, independent financial audit, and submit it to the district in written form by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- It explains how the school will comply with any GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) provisions. (GASB is an oversight entity that develops accounting standards for state and local governments.) An explanation is also given as to how the school will remain fiscally solvent; adhere to generally acceptable accounting practices; have no material breaches; will address any management letter concerns; and will disseminate the results from the audit with the school district, the public and required state agencies.
- The application provides financial policies and procedures and a management plan that the board and administration will implement and follow to ensure that the school remains fiscally solvent.
- Appropriate internal controls are implemented to ensure a sound financial management system that includes checks and balances in cash disbursement and oversight, and the school has provided sample financial templates and reports, such as a dashboard template, as an attachment.
- The application provides financial policies and procedures that ensure that the school’s financial

priorities are aligned with the vision, mission and goals as well as the growth, curriculum and professional development plans. Included is a description of an annual process for evaluating whether financial allocations have effectively supported the school in carrying out its mission and meeting its goals, and the process by which the governing board and the school leader make mid-year and annual financial decisions.

- The school identifies an evaluation or internal audit process of financial spending decisions based on a data-driven needs assessment, and mission alignment.
- If any financial services are to be provided by the state, a school district, or another third party, the applicant has provided criteria used in selection, costs, qualification, and a description of the manner in which these services will be conducted, to include a management contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) where applicable.
- If the school is to obtain a 501(c)(3), it states how it will ensure proper reporting to the federal government by submitting a 990 form (indicates compliance with Sarbanes Oxley requirements.) The school will also comply with state and federal requirements, including GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) and GASB. (See CDE finance guide and other resources at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/fin/index.htm> for more information.)

## M. Facilities \*

This section provides information on the school's short- and long-term facility plans. If the founding committee has not already identified a definite school facility, the committee has identified at least two prospective facility sites and the application contains a cogent strategy for acquiring one or more of the prospective sites.

- Provides at a minimum a 4 year facility needs assessment, including: how many classrooms are needed; how many specials rooms are needed (art, music, gym, special education, etc.); minimum size of each classroom; library space needed; number of bathrooms needed; number of offices needed; amount of common space needed; outdoor space needed; square foot needs/student; parking needed; etc. that is adequate to implement the school program and mission.
- Includes the target location for the school building (geographical boundaries based on student outreach and enrollment).
- Provides as much detail as possible about planned or prospective facilities and a plan including a proposed schedule to finalize one; location (or general location if confidentiality is important due to lease negotiations); size; square foot needs (per pupil and total) including shared spaces; and how each facility aligns with the facility needs assessment as well as the school's mission. It is highly advisable, in order to show proper due diligence, to include a minimum of two potential sites, even if the school anticipates using a district building.
- The application includes reference to the type of professional assistance the founding committee is accessing in order to effectively navigate the real estate market. Any budget impacts should be

included as well as a brief description of the relationship.

**Note:** Professionals can include a school space leasing specialist or a commercial real estate broker with a specialization in school facilities. It is important that the professional be familiar with public school transactions, as facility requirements differ from typical commercial transactions. The Capital Construction Division of the Colorado Department of Education may be of assistance in facilities planning. Contact Dustin Guerin at 303.866.6263 or [Guerin\\_D@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Guerin_D@cde.state.co.us) or Scott Newell at 303 866-6717 or [newell\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:newell_s@cde.state.co.us) for more information on how the Capital Construction Division can be of assistance in reviewing contracts, looking at identified facilities, etc.

- Presents a reasonable and appropriate timeline and a sound plan for acquiring and renovating a facility that includes a contingency plan for securing or completing the school facility by the school's opening date.
- An explanation of how funds are being realistically allocated for facility costs in the budget is provided. As a guide, total facility costs should not exceed 18% of the budget. Budget items should include potential lease costs, renovation expenses (hard and soft costs and professional fees relating to the same), cost per square foot, average cost/square foot in the area, utilities, insurance, upkeep and maintenance, and any other expenses involved in preparing the building for use as a school, as well as the percentage of the budget designated for facility needs. If additional funds or financing will be needed to bring a facility on-line, the application narrative and attached budget should identify potential grants and/or lending sources.

**Note:** Many charter schools have been able to finance their own facilities with tax-exempt bond financing through the Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority (CECFA); however, these are typically established schools. Information can be found by calling CECFA at 303-297-2538. A state debt reserve fund exists to enhance the ability of charters that finance facility needs through bonds. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-407.) A charter must provide the state treasurer with information about expended monies from this fund. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-408(2)(d) for more information.) Other sources of tenant finish or acquisition financing may be available to new schools from some non-profit lenders and or charter school facility developers. Applicant may consult financial advisors for such resources. (Information on purchasing furnishings and supplies can be found at: <http://coloradoleague.site-ym.com/?page=nsdresources> Please contact the League for more information.)

- Letters of Intent are included for prospective sites as applicable.
- There should be a clear understanding that construction permits and building and fire safety inspections have been or will be obtained, and the school provides zoning and occupancy requirements; assurance that the facility will comply with ( C.R.S. 22-32-124) and applicable building codes, health and safety laws, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if needed for opening.

**Note:** The CDE website contains a link with general information on the process. The state is responsible for review of plans, building inspections, and issuance of certificates of occupancy ( C.R.S. 22-32-124) for public schools and information can be obtained by calling the Colorado Department of Fire Safety at 303-239-4600 or a review of their website at: <http://dfs.state.co.us/programs-2/emergency->

[management/public-school-and-junior-college-construction-and-inspection](http://dfs.state.co.us/programs-2/emergency-management/public-school-and-junior-college-construction-and-inspection). Inspections may be conducted through that department, by a certified third-party inspector, or a local certified planning department. (See: <http://dfs.state.co.us/programs-2/emergency-management/public-school-and-junior-college-construction-and-inspection/inspector-certification-information>.) The applicant should also provide statutory notice to the local planning department pursuant to C.R.S. 22-32-124, which governs local planning issues for schools. Applicants should provide such notice and communicate with the local officials in the planning department to address comments, and check with the district facilities director for information concerning the health and life safety requirements of the local authorities.

## N.1. Transportation

This section addresses whether the school plans to offer any transportation services to its students. Charter schools are not required by law to provide transportation; however, the founding committee should give some thought to how students' transportation needs will be met without transportation services. Finally, many federal and state rules and regulations relate to the provision of transportation services. One specific rule to be aware of is that any small vehicles or school buses owned and operated by a charter school, or under contract, must meet the safety and operating standards as prescribed in State Board Rules 1 CCR 301-25, 301-26 and 301-29. (For more information, see <http://www.cde.state.co.us/transportation/guidelinesandregulations>.)

If the school does plan to offer transportation:

- The applicant explains how this will be provided to include field trips, before and after school, and extra-curricular activities (e.g. through the district, private transportation service, school-purchased buses, etc.).

If the school does not plan to offer transportation:

- The applicant provides some alternative means for meeting students' transportation needs to include low-income students (e.g. arranging carpools, purchasing bus passes for older students, etc.)
- This section of the application also reflects a commitment from the school to meet the transportation needs of students with IEPs or 504s, or homeless students that require transportation services. (This is usually negotiated in the authorizer contract. Homeless services are explained under the McKinney-Vento act. See: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/transportation/transhomeless>.)
- In either scenario, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that the budget accurately reflects the cost of providing student transportation and insurance, and addresses safety needs using private, public, or school vehicles.

## N.2. Food Service

This section addresses whether the school plans to offer food service to its students. Schools that anticipate serving a significant number of students who qualify for the free and reduced lunch (FRL) program are strongly encouraged to participate in food programs under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). (For more information see: the CDE nutrition link at: [www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition](http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition) or contact Jan Bodnar @ 303-866-6306 in the Office of School Nutrition and CharterChoice link at: [bknickebocker@charterchoicecollaborative.org](mailto:bknickebocker@charterchoicecollaborative.org) and/or contact Britton Knickerbocker @ 303-953-4170, Executive Director of CharterChoice.) The application should also indicate whether or not the school will have its own wellness policy or if it will follow the wellness policy of its district or School Food Authority <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutriwellness>.

If the school does plan to offer food programs under the National School Lunch Program:

- The school should designate an authorized School Food Authority (district, CharterChoice Collaborative, or charter SFA). In collaboration with their SFA, schools should outline a plan for the required steps to obtain and operate a food service program under the NSLP. These steps include securing a food vendor through a Request for Proposal process (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrifsmc>), establishing a method for distributing and collecting FRL applications, and preparing to operate a food service program that is compliant with both federal USDA guidelines as well as food safety and facility regulations.
- This section addresses how the school will meet the needs of students who forget or cannot provide a lunch or for an extended day program. (For more information visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/FamilyEconomicDataSurvey.htm>.)
- The school should create a budget for food services that reflects all expenses (staffing, meals, equipment, and other costs) as well as revenue (reimbursements for meals served in compliance, and monies collected from paying students).

**Note:** Schools should also consider how to market their food programs to parents to ensure adequate and increased participation. (C.R.S. 22-30.5-524 for Children's nutrition information.) If the school chooses not to participate in the National School Lunch Program, it may want to consider the Special Milk Program. The school should also make plans to collect Economic Data Surveys from families instead of Free and Reduced Lunch Applications for purposes of other funding (i.e., Title funds).

## O. Employees

This section provides a variety of information on the school's employees and employment policies, and the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees. There should be information on how the school will adhere to background check (C.R.S. 22-30.5-110.5 and C.R.S. 22-1-

121) and fingerprinting (C.R.S. 22-30.5-110.7) requirements, verify immigration status, and implement non-discriminatory and Equal Opportunity Employment practices. As charter schools are, by statute, public schools and government entities, employees of charter schools are thus considered public employees. Charter schools and their employees must participate in Colorado's Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA) defined benefit retirement fund (C.R.S.22-30.5-512 and 22-30.5-111(3)) (See budget section for links to PERA information and PERA 101 for employers located at <https://www.copera.org/sites/default/files/form/pdf-upload/5-144.pdf> ).

There are several resources that provide more information about employment issues. Tax information is available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and through the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment at [www.coworkforce.com](http://www.coworkforce.com), and federal labor law information is available from the U. S. Department of Labor at: [www.dol.gov/elaws/firststep](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/firststep).

Because this is such a substantial section of the application, it is strongly recommended that the applicant break this section down into the following subsections:

#### O.1. Employees: Staff Hiring

This subsection focuses on the process to hire faculty and staff that are skilled and is aligned to the school's vision and mission, and provides the qualities and qualifications for each position at the school.

- The narrative thoroughly describes the recruiting/hiring process to include how positions will be publicized, any standards that will be used, and the timeline.
- Minimum teacher qualifications must include Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ESEA) requirements for Highly Qualified teachers, which is not the same as licensure. (See Highly Qualified Teachers' Workbook at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/tii/a\\_hqt.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/tii/a_hqt.asp)). Colorado charter school law does not require charter school teachers to be licensed (note if the school will obtain a waiver, however, some charter schools have made this an explicit expectation for all teachers), except in the case of Special Ed teachers; who must be licensed. Clear standards are in place to determine staff qualifications.
- Job descriptions for all key employees, including teachers and administrative staff members are included, with a clear delineation of the staff requirements and role of the head administrator in the area of employee hiring, evaluation and firing. These job descriptions are especially important and will help the reader better understand the school when non-traditional or unique roles/jobs are planned.
- A clear explanation is given of how the school plans to classify its employees and communicate that when hiring. If the school's employees will be "at-will" employees, the application provides a definition of what this means.
- Clear communication to potential staff that all employees hired by the school shall be employees of the school and not the district, and that all employee decisions, including discipline and termination, shall be made solely by the school.

#### O.2. Employees: Management & Evaluation

This subsection focuses on how the school will develop a comprehensive, consistent evaluation plan in alignment with the school's vision and mission, goals, curriculum, assessment, academic expectations, and professional development of staff.

- The plan explains how the School Leader conducts at least an annual evaluation, with a mid-year progress check, or ideally twice annual formal evaluations of its faculty and staff. The school uses this data to inform and to improve the educational program and organizational structure to support academic progress. A clear plan of support for staff development and funding is tied to the evaluation process and included in both the narrative and the budget. Explanation is also given as to how the school will assess, on an annual basis, whether good hiring decisions were made.
- Time and duties are allotted in job descriptions of administrative staff to allow for faculty and staff performance observations, follow-up discussions and coaching as needed.
- School leadership and instructional staff plan to use external assessment results to obtain information on student learning, achievement gaps, and instruction, and to access and use data systems to efficiently manage, disaggregate, display, and report multiple types and sources of data. Data will be used to adjust or change curriculum and instruction, and professional development focus areas.
- A clear plan is in place to develop a manageable yet comprehensive, consistent evaluation plan in alignment with the school's mission, goals, educational program and student achievement goals, assessment, academic expectations and professional development of faculty and staff with the intent of that plan described. Reference is made as to the intent of implementing the employee evaluation expectations adopted in SB 191 to include 50% of the evaluation being based on student academic performance, or the replacement plan if waived. (For information on SB 191 see: C.R.S. 22-9-106, and [www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb-policy](http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb-policy) ) Employee evaluation tools that have already been developed for the school are attached in the appendices, and the standards of evaluation are described in the narrative and include key performance criteria and observation protocols, how they were developed, and evidence of how the staff will be held to high professional standards.

### O.3. Employees: School Structure, Policies & Procedures

This subsection focuses on the structures, policies, and procedures that will be used to guide the school administration.

- A reference to the school's employee policies, that are included in a handbook or an appendix, or a clear plan/timeline for timely development and intent of such policies are described in the narrative. The school will need to adopt many personnel policies and the founding committee should review several quality schools' employee handbooks for examples. Some key policies that need to either be included and/or the intent explained in the application narrative include, but are not limited to, employment practices, benefits, leave policies, grievance policy and procedures, conflict of interest policy, harassment, drug-free workplace, classroom practices, evaluation practices, salary range and performance structure if applicable, if the school will use employment contracts, etc.

**Note:** In the absence of employment contracts, the default employment relationship between the school



and employees is at-will, however, there are many exclusions to the at-will doctrine, and the school should receive legal advice to understand the at-will relationship, exclusions, and how the employee manual and other documents and policies may impact the at-will relationship. Careful attention should be given to wording in policies and employment documents in order to maintain the at-will employment relationship. It is recommended any policies and contracts/agreements be reviewed by legal counsel.

- An organizational chart is included, and shows position/title, and year a position will be added as the school grows with a delineation in the narrative of who is responsible for employment decisions and oversight at each level of the organizational chart (governing board or lead administrator) including recruiting, hiring, performance evaluation, renewal decisions, and firing.
- A staff roster for the first 5 years of the school is explained in the narrative and provided in a table in either the appendices or budget, and should match the budget assumption sheets and address all administrative, auxiliary, and educational staffing needs to include para-professional and specialty positions such as specials, ELL and Special Education, and outsourced service providers. This should include information on the student/teacher ratio and the student/adult ratio in the school. A leadership team description and succession planning should also be addressed. (See: <http://www.crpe.org/publications/you%E2%80%99re-leaving-sustainability-and-succession-charter-schools>)
- All employment policies, including the employee handbook, clearly state that the policy may be amended or revised at the discretion of the School.

**Note:** The model contract states: “Other terms of the employment relationship are described in the Employee Handbook submitted as part of the School’s charter application.” Due to the model contract, many authorizers may require a finished or at least draft, employee handbook as part of the application. Legal counsel should be engaged to annually, or as necessary, review policies.

**Note:** Clear and consistent implementation of school policies is an important part of being an employer. School administration should undergo training as necessary in order to fully understand employee policies and so that policies are implemented correctly.

## P. Insurance Coverage

This narrative section clearly demonstrates the school will meet all applicable insurance requirements and explains what types of insurance the school plans to carry to protect itself and its students. The school shall obtain reasonable assumptions for costs, and purchase insurance protecting the school and charter board, employees, and volunteers (if allowable by policy), and authorizer where appropriate, consisting of comprehensive general liability insurance, errors and omissions liability insurance (school entity liability insurance) and auto liability insurance. The school shall also purchase statutory workers’ compensation insurance coverage.

- Explains the process the school will use to create and maintain an emergency management

plan. Within this plan the school should consider forming safety teams (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(2) and (4)(d)(I)), appointing a designated crisis response spokesperson, and establishing a claims management follow-up process.

Minimum coverages for the current school year are listed below:

- Comprehensive general liability at a minimum of \$2,000,000 per occurrence/wrongful act that covers at least the following: Bodily Injury; Property Damage; Abuse and Molestation; Employee Benefits; Employment Practices;
- Officers, directors and employee errors and omissions- \$1,000,000.
- Insurance program should also place coverage that meets individual exposures for the following:
- Including business income and extra expense; Crime and Fiduciary Liability; Student Accident; Off-campus activities, including field trips, program specific needs (i.e. expeditions, service learning, etc.) and sporting events; Cyber Liability, including social media exposures; Excess or Umbrella Policy should be carried at a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence/wrongful act that considers many of the school's liability exposures.
- Workers' compensation as required by state law, and in place before workers start. (C.R.S. 8-40-202)

**Note:** Premiums are based on payroll and classification of employees. See the Department of Labor website at: <https://www.colorado.gov/cdle> for additional information.

- Property insurance as required by landlord and reasonable to cover school losses.
- Motor vehicle liability (if appropriate) - \$1,000,000.
- Bonding (if appropriate): Minimum amounts: \$25,000; Maximum amounts: \$100,000.
- Quotes or adequate cost information for the above policies have been included in the budget and appendix, where applicable, and show reasonable assumptions.
- Any technology and processes the school will employ to ensure the ongoing safety and security of students and staff is explained in the narrative. (See [www.Colorado.gov/CSSRC](http://www.Colorado.gov/CSSRC) for more detailed information.)

**Note:** Coverage shall be underwritten by an insurer that is legally authorized in the State of Colorado and rated by A.M. Best Company not lower than "A-VII". The school shall provide certificates of insurance to the authorizer annually. The school should review authorizer's policies on insurance requirements to ensure compliance with all specific policies.

## Q. Dispute Resolution Process

This section is simply a paragraph or two that reflects the school's understanding of and compliance with C.R.S. 22-30.5-107.5, which explains how the school and its authorizer agree to resolve disputes that may arise concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract.

- The dispute resolution plan demonstrates reasonable method(s) for resolving disagreements, which arise between a charter school and its authorizer, concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract. Methods of settling a dispute if an agreement cannot be reached by mutual consent may include mutually agreeing to use an alternative dispute resolution process and the findings of a neutral third party and agreeing to be bound by their findings, or may include an appeal to the State Board of Education for a final decision. Any decision by the State Board is final.
- The dispute resolution plan shows a clear understanding for compliance with statutory requirements for both the charter school and the authorizer (C.R.S. 22-30.5-107.5). This should include a process to reach an agreement within 30 days of receipt of notice.

**Note:** This is different from a grievance process which parents, staff and students can access in order to address areas of concern or policy violations within the school. It will be important to include a grievance process within the school's policies.

## R. Waivers

This section includes a statement at the beginning of it acknowledging a commitment to comply with all laws and policies that are not waived. This section focuses primarily on the waivers being requested and is broken down into two primary subsections: state waivers and district waivers. The requested waivers should match the proposed autonomy, school mission and goals, operations, governance, and employment relationships of the proposed charter school. It is advisable for an applicant to obtain legal counsel when determining which waivers to seek from either the state or the authorizer. If an authorizer provides a listing of automatic statutory and policy waivers, or the school plans on taking the automatic state waivers provided for in law, the application needs to reflect which waivers the school will utilize, plus any other additional non-automatic state waiver requests, which will require review by the State Board of Education. Waiver requests should provide the detailed information identified under each subsection below. As a best practice, authorizers may ask for replacement plans for both automatic and non-automatic statutory waivers.

**Note:** Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-30.5-103, Automatic Waivers are those automatically granted upon the establishment of a charter contract. Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(6), the State Board will adopt, by rule, a list of automatic waivers for which the school is not required to submit a replacement plan, or statement, to the Colorado Department of Education, to specify the manner in which the school intends to comply with the intent of the state statute or State Board rule. See the Colorado Department of Education's charter school Waiver Requests webpage at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/waivers> for an updated list of such waivers.

- The state waiver subsection includes a list of the state statutes for which waivers are being requested. In addition to listing the statutes requested for automatic waivers, for all non-automatic waivers being requested, the applicant also provides a policy or replacement plan for what the

charter school will do instead, as well as the rationale or purpose for requesting the waiver, expected financial and implementation impact, and how the effectiveness of the waiver will be evaluated.

- The district waiver subsection includes a list of the district policies for which waivers are being requested. Again, in addition to listing the policies, the applicant includes a draft replacement policy or explains the replacement plan that the school will adopt, as well as the rationale or purpose for requesting the waiver, the expected financial and implementation impact, and how the effectiveness of the waiver will be evaluated. A timeline should be included for when the final policies will be developed. (Sample policy waiver examples are available from the League upon request.)

**Note:** The founding committee is encouraged to visit with other charter schools under the authority of the same authorizer to determine typical waivers that are granted and to also review the waivers that the Colorado Department of Education has previously approved for charter schools:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/rptStateWaiversCharter%208.29.13.pdf> Applicants may access information on applying for waivers from the state on the CDE Charter Schools Web site:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/waivers.asp>. An example of waiver applications can be found in the CDE Charter Schools Guidebook of Best Practices:

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/index.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/index.htm), and on the waiver request page at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/Sample%20RRP.pdf>

**Note:** Waivers are neither necessary nor appropriate when a statute or rule by express terms does not apply to a charter school, nor when a district power or duty has been fully delegated, as more specifically stated in the contract, to the school. The school is expected to only seek waivers if a statute or rule applies to the school and the waiver is consistent with the school's operational or educational needs.

## S. School Management Contracts

This section, if applicable, should explain and justify the proposed charter school's intent to contract with an Education Management Provider (such as a Charter Management Organization (CMO) (which includes a board serving over multiple schools with a central office for business services, and is typically non-profit), an Education Management Organization (EMO, which is typically for-profit), an Education Service Provider ((ESP), which is a term that is often used to refer to either of the previously mentioned groups), charter collaborative, or any other type of school management or services provider, (C.R.S. 22-30.5-103(3.5) ; C.R.S. 22-30.104(4)(b) and C.R.S 22-30.5-502(4.5)) to provide, manage, or oversee all or substantially all of the educational services provided by the charter school.

- Includes a logical explanation of how and why the services provider or central services configuration was selected or developed, and how the selected provider or services configuration will meet the school's needs. A list of schools operated and contact information for each should be provided along with a summary of reference checks conducted by the applicant, regarding the services provider, and including the name of the reference.
- Provides demonstrated evidence that the services provider has been successful in the academic

and/or business operation aspects of other schools, including demonstrated academic achievement with the target population, as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g. back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs) and financial health. Explanation should be given of any management contract terminations, non-renewals, or non-openings.

- Provides explanation and evidence demonstrating the desired provider has capacity to take on the needs of this school, while also maintaining quality for its existing schools.
- Description is included of how the charter board will exercise its statutory duty, contractual and fiduciary responsibilities so long as the charter school maintains a governing board that is independent of the education management provider (C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(4)(b)), along with an explanation of how the charter board maintains the ability to sever the relationship and that the provider will not require a charter board to assert, waive or not waive its governmental immunity. Details are sufficient to assure there are no potential conflicts of interest between the services provider and the governing board.
- Reasonable management contract terms and fees, that do not exceed the term of the charter, along with clear measurable performance metrics, penalty clauses, and contract severing provisions for both parties are explained and supported in documentation. Strong consideration should be given to the charter school governing board having the right to terminate the contract without cause or financial penalty. (See Service Provider Guidelines document referenced below.) Narrative explanation also covers duration, renewal and terms, how often the agreement is renewed and conditions each must meet to renew the contract. The provider agreement should recognize the requirement for educational materials and teaching techniques to be subject to state disclosure laws and Open Records Act.
- There is a clear plan for frequency and process for monitoring and evaluating performance of the services provider and adequate internal controls are in place that include how the governing board will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations and the process to intervene as needed; exercise their fiduciary responsibility; retain as charter property and have the right to access financial, educational, and student records that are to be physically and electronically available; retain the school's independent auditor who has the right to access financial and other records of the services provider related to the charter as needed; be represented by separate legal counsel; and operate under the Colorado Sunshine, Open Records Act, and Open Meetings Laws all independent from the services provider.
- Provides clear evidence that the services provider is authorized to conduct business in Colorado, and information as to whom the provider reports.
- Details a clear understanding of financial obligation to the services provider and if it increases, decreases or stays the same for the duration of the relationship. This includes the school board's right to determine investments, deposits of funds in the charter's account and disbursement of any excess revenues, method of paying fees to the provider dependent on properly presented documentation provided for ratification of payment by the charter board, ownership of products obtained with the use of public funds (e.g. textbooks, curriculum alignments to Colorado Academic Standards, equipment, supplies, etc.) and without added fees when acquired through the provider.
- Includes a clear description of which staff members will be hired, report to, and be paid, evaluated

and terminated by the services provider, and any relationship with the governing board on these decisions, and how the board will oversee this. The services provider agreement must provide that the leasing company accepts full liability for benefits, salaries, worker's comp, unemployment compensation and liability insurance for its employees leased to the charter, with confirmation the employment structure qualifies as employee leasing. The agreement must contain insurance and indemnification provisions outlining the coverage the service provider will obtain.

- Marketing and development costs paid by or charged to the charter are limited to the costs specific to the charter program.
- A separate agreement is in place for building ownership or lease if the developers are making payments to the services provider. This must be consistent with a school's authority to terminate a services provider agreement and still operate as a school. The school should engage counsel with subject matter expertise on facilities, building ownership and leases prior to signing any contracts.
- The following items should be attached to the charter application:
  - Term sheet is included with clear performance measures and contract severing provisions. The terms sheet also sets forth the proposed duration of the management contract; roles and responsibilities; scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the services provider; performance evaluation measures and timelines; compensation structure including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the services provider and what is provided for those fees; schedule on which the provider will receive compensation; which operations and capital expenses each is responsible for; reports the services provider must provide and schedule frequency; how often and in what way the board will review and evaluate performance and other methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal, board intervention and termination of the contract.
  - Proposed draft management contract including all of the above terms and a clear Conflict of Interest statement and indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
  - Documented evidence that the services provider is authorized to do business in Colorado (e.g. licensed), has demonstrated academic success for all schools operated with students demographically similar to the target population in the same grade level(s) (e.g. assessment data), has sound business practices (e.g. a copy of most recent audit), and has successfully managed other schools (e.g. specific references and contact information are provided).

**Note:** For more information on for-profit entities not holding charter contracts with authorizers (C.R.S. 22-30.5-110(7) and 511(8)) and working with a services provider, see Attachment 5: Educational Services Provider Agreement Guidelines on page 41 of *Sample Contract Language and Attachments August 2014*. [www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/distauthinfo](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/distauthinfo)

### Part III: Charter School Intent to Submit Form

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Name of proposed school: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street and/or PO Box

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Model or focus of proposed school: (ex. Arts, College Prep, Dual Language, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade levels to be served: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the school expect to contract with a charter management organization or company for school management or operation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, identify the charter management organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Principal or Lead Administrator Information

Name of proposed Principal candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Current employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Projected enrollment and demographics chart

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
School Year 1														
School Year 2														
School Year 3														
School Year 4														
School Year 5														

	% ELL	% SPED	% FRL
School Year 1			
School Year 2			
School Year 3			
School Year 4			
School Year 5			

Name of applicant team or founding entity:

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- Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on the applicant team:
- Does the applicant team or any members of the team currently operate any other schools?  
☐ Yes   ☐ No
- Explain the individual and collective qualifications of the applicant team members to establish a high-quality charter school, in particular the capacity to assume responsibility for public funds, administration and governance.
- Include as attachments resumes for each individual on the applicant team.
- Explain the circumstances and motivations that brought the applicant team together to propose this charter school.
- Which applicant team members will become founding board members?



Identify any organizations, agencies, consultants or institutions of higher education that are partners in planning and establishing this charter school, along with a brief description of their current and planned role and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.

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## Part IV: Standard Application Evaluation Rubric

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The Evaluation Rubric (Rubric) is the final section of the Colorado Charter School Standard Application Guidebook. The Evaluation Rubric is a tool for both the Authorizer and reviewers, and the charter school applicant and planning team. The Authorizer and reviewers may use the Rubric to determine the quality of applications and to make approval decisions. The charter applicant may use the Rubric to guide the writing of their application and self-evaluate their application prior to submission to the Authorizer. Each main Application Section of the Rubric is mandated by state statute.

The Application Sections and sub-sections are evaluated on a set of Quality Design Criteria (Criteria) with multiple Indicators under each section. The evaluation is based on a 0-4 rating scale - 4 is the highest score and “exceeds Criteria” and 0 is the lowest score and “does not meet Criteria.” A section that scores a “4” or a “3” exceeds or meets an appropriate level of expectation for that criterion.

The Rubric identifies 8 Application Sections and one sub-section that are considered ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS and identified with \*. The Essential Components sections are considered the critical foundation to opening a quality school, and typically appear as an Authorizers’ more heavily weighted requirements. It is anticipated a developer should only apply to an authorizer if all of these essential sections are developed to a level that would score a 3 or higher.

The maximum score on the Rubric will be dependent on if any Application Sections are not relevant and on what weight the authorizer gives to each Section. Application Sections that may not be applicable to all applicants and therefore may not receive scores are Food Service, Transportation, and School Management Contract. Please contact your authorizer to determine the applicable Sections and maximum score related to your specific charter application.

### Rating Scale & Characteristics

Rating Scale	Characteristics
4- Exceeds Criteria	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and fully meets or exceeds these criteria. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant’s capacity to carry out the plan effectively. Examples or evidence are provided for all appropriate sections.
3 - Adequately Addresses Criteria	The response adequately addresses or meets an appropriate level of expectation for these criteria. Examples or evidence are provided for all appropriate sections if available. If examples or evidence are unavailable, a timeline to include or submit this information is stated in the application.

1 - Partially Addresses  
Criteria

The response meets the criteria in some respects but does not sufficiently address or has substantial gaps in a number of areas. Examples and evidence are provided in a few appropriate sections.

0 - Does Not Address  
Criteria

The response is wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out. No examples or evidence are provided.

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Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>A. Executive Summary</b>						
This section summarizes the key points of the proposal and sets the stage for the upcoming content. It is no more than two to three pages.						
Proposal clearly summarizes the elements of the application, to include:						
• The school's vision and mission.						
• Grades served the first year and at full build out.						
• Overview of culture, educational philosophy and key programmatic features and approaches to fulfill vision and mission.						
• Stated current community need and target population.						
• Leadership, governance, management, and organizational structure and operations, academic and finance oversight, and professional development.						
<b>Executive Summary Component</b>	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:			0	
<b>B. Vision &amp; Mission Statements</b>						
This section reflects the founders' intent and purpose of the school through articulated vision and mission statements.						
The vision statement:						
• Concisely articulates <i>what</i> the applicant envisions for the school and its long term impact for the future 5-10 years.						
The mission statement:						
• Concisely expresses clear, focused and compelling purposes and priorities that will guide school operations and are meaningful, measurable, and attainable, and explains <i>how</i> the school will reach its vision.						
• Focuses on high quality educational outcomes that are the driving force and rationale behind all other components of the application.						
<b>Vision &amp; Mission Statements Component</b>	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>C. Goals, Objectives, &amp; Pupil Performance Standards *</b>						
This section focuses on the specific outcomes anticipated for the school and its students within the terms of the charter (usually four years). The majority of the goals and objectives are focused on specific student outcomes (pupil performance or educational performance goals); others are broader school-based goals and objectives (organizational and management performance goals).						
The school has:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly stated high and attainable educational goals with strategies in place to ensure that all students are making progress toward meeting all academic goals.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goals that meet or exceed state and federal performance expectations.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“SMART” goals, (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious and Attainable, Reflective of and Relevant to the School’s Mission, and Time-Specific with a Target Date) that reflect high expectations.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives and strategies that are aligned to the goals, proven effective, and are tied to research.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligned goals with its vision and mission.</li> </ul>						
School Goals:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of and strategy for complying with state and authorizer achievement and reporting requirements including those related to accountability reporting and accreditation (i.e. Unified Improvement Planning, data pipeline, etc.)</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe plans to meet state accreditation requirements through the performance indicators outlined in the Colorado school performance framework (SPF).</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include non-academic goals pertinent to student population, programming, operations and management as predicated by the school’s vision and mission.</li> </ul>						
<b>Goals, Objectives and Pupil Performance Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>		0		

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>D. Educational Program &amp; Standards *</b>						
This section details an effective, well thought out, research-based educational program that aligns with the school's mission, goals, and the student population, and the Colorado Academic standards.						
<b>D.1. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Educational Philosophy &amp; Culture</b>						
The school describes the founding committee's core beliefs about academic and school excellence, and articulates a planned culture with implementation strategies.						
The school:						
• Cites research or academic history of the chosen school model that support core beliefs and high academic expectations.						
• Articulates an understanding of the identified student population that is congruent with planned culture and educational philosophy.						
• Describes the planned culture for the school and how it will promote a positive academic environment that reinforces student intellectual and social development.						
• Explains the systems, practices and traditions created to foster this culture in all students, staff, and parents; and includes a description of strategies that will be implemented to involve students.						
• Ensures alignment between the vision and mission statements, target population, school culture; and frames the context for choosing the curriculum, instructional practices, interventions, evaluations, and all components for the educational plan.						
<b>D.2. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Curriculum*</b>						
The school describes the critical aspects of each component of the curriculum. The curriculum is research based, aligned to the Colorado Academic standards, and describes how the curriculum will meet the needs of the target student population. A full scope and sequence is included as an Appendix.						
The school:						
• Describes an organized, cohesive curricular design that aligns to the vision, mission and philosophy of the school, along with clear research demonstrating it will meet the needs of the target population based on demographic and academic performance data.						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justifies how the chosen curriculum meets or exceeds Colorado Academic Standards and is aligned across all subject areas.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an overview of all subjects to be taught at each grade level and cites alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards. This includes the curricular framework, along with the appropriate levels of detail for objectives, content, skills, and learning outcomes for each subject and for all grades the school will serve.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines how the school will ensure the horizontal alignment between classrooms and the vertical alignment of curriculum across grade levels.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines how school will monitor implementation of curriculum to include scope and sequence and exit standards.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes high school credit requirements in comparison to district requirements and course descriptions of all class offerings, where appropriate.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies how the Individual Career Academic Plans (ICAP) will be integrated into the academic program.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides research and history of academic success of selected school model and programs working with similar student population or convincing rationale.</li> </ul>					
<b>D.3. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Instruction</b> The school identifies quality instruction that is research-based and has been effective in meeting the needs of the target population. For unique or innovative practices, the team presents a compelling rationale for effectiveness. Instruction should be aligned to the educational philosophy.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures educational practices are aligned to the schools educational philosophy and are proven to be successful with similar student populations.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed instructional practices support and are aligned with the schools vision and mission.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how instruction will be differentiated based on identified student needs and examples are provided.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides research on the proposed instructional practices for the chosen population and curriculum is included in the appendices.</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefly introduces the Response to Intervention (RtI) model and how it will be incorporated into the school's instructional program for all students.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illustrates how teachers ensure that each student masters content objectives, and develops related skills to demonstrate proficiency across all subjects and standards.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes classroom culture, learning environment, class size, and tools used to prepare and structure lessons.</li> </ul>						
<b>D.4. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Supplemental Programs, Specials or Electives</b> The school describes any unique curricular aspects of the school's program, such as a service-learning, after school programs, clubs, and family programs that are key components of the school.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thoroughly describes supplemental programs, specials and/or electives that are integral to its curriculum and provides research.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirms whether afterschool or summer school will be offered and the criteria for selection of participants, times of operation, and the anticipated number of students that may attend.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures chosen programs are aligned to the mission and vision, educational philosophy, and the curriculum.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies the faculty, staff, or partnership organization that will oversee and provide services.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures there is adequate funding for the program(s).</li> </ul>						
<b>D.5. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Professional Development</b> The school provides a description of the ongoing professional development for faculty and staff, such as individual professional development plans, staff-wide trainings, and the assessment of progress made toward professional performance goals. Professional development aligns with the vision and mission, values and goals of the school, and the implementation of the educational plan.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes professional development plans to include the number of professional development days, proposed schedule, and topics covered to implement the educational plan, and build the school culture.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures training for SPED, ELL, and G/T students are incorporated into all topics.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a description of methods the school will use to ensure the ongoing professional development of its faculty and staff.</li> </ul>						



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies a timeline, lead contact, specific action steps and evaluation for effectiveness within it professional development plan.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of the time and resources necessary to train, implement and sustain quality professional staff through appropriate allotment of scheduled time and funds.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes a clear outline of how the school will use information from the curriculum monitoring process to facilitate and adjust professional development and goal setting, and to ensure relevant and differentiated feedback toward continuous improvement in the education program.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures all members of the school team will participate in trainings related to the planned technological aspects of the academic program and use of technology.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies (if known) the person(s) or organization(s) that will provide professional development and mentoring options to the faculty, staff and administration. or identifies how providers will be selected.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of faculty support and mentorships through regular observation, evaluation and feedback.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures PD aligns with mission, values and goals of school.</li> </ul>					
<b>D.6. Educational Program &amp; Standards: Structure, Annual Calendar &amp; Daily Schedule</b>					
The school's organizational structure places a priority on implementing the chosen curriculum with fidelity and in its entirety within the confines of an annual calendar and daily schedule in compliance with statutory regulations.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a description of the organizational structure of the school that demonstrates enough support to fully implement the curriculum and monitor ongoing modifications to the curriculum.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calendar reflects time for collaborative planning and professional development in the annual calendar and daily teacher schedule with expected number of days and hours noted in the narrative.</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a draft annual calendar and daily schedule that reflects the minimum number of student contact hours required by the state (C.R.S. 22-33-104 et. seq. and C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(I-II)(A and B), to include teacher work and PD days and total hours of instruction; viability of the curriculum and notes whether the proposal includes an extended day/year. The total number of days in the year is identified.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a daily schedule for teachers and students that reflects adequate time each day to implement the intended program(s), and gives the length of the school day with the start and dismissal times, the hours and minutes/day and week dedicated to academic instruction per grade, core instructional areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, and electives/supplemental programs.</li> </ul>					
<b>Educational Program and Standards Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>			
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>E. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students *</b>						
This section discusses how the school will address exceptional and educationally disadvantaged student needs. Specific research-based instructional programs, practices and strategies should be employed to produce a continuum of services to help ensure academic success for all students that are supported by appropriate assessments.						
<b>E.1. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students : Program Administration</b>						
The school summarizes the approach, oversight, and design of program(s) to serve exceptional students.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains how the assessment system will enable the school to identify exceptional and ELL students and how the student and teacher daily schedules provide adequate time for services and supports.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how best practices are strategically utilized to service exceptional student needs and how these engagement strategies will be implemented, maintained and overseen.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes instructor responsibilities for any necessary modifications and adaptations made to existing curriculum and collaborative strategies to ensure access and engagement in all aspects of academics and school community.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies the number and type of instructional or other staff that will teach or support exceptional students, including contracted service providers.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and describes the staff member(s) qualifications to oversee exceptional student education. Licensed Special Education and ELL teachers are hired to collaborate with general education teachers and meet the level of service and oversight required to implement the program(s).</li> </ul>						
<b>E.2. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Students with Individualized Education Plans</b>						
The school focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).						
The school:						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of the legal requirements of IDEA and Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan summarizes the staffing strategies and staff qualifications, allocation of resources to special education, student evaluation, identification and assessment process, to include progress monitoring of student success.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates understanding of the components of an IEP (including transition services) as defined by IDEA and anticipates providing students meaningful access to the general curriculum and other educational needs through appropriate resources, services, technologies and supports.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines a method for IEP progress reporting toward annual goals, assessment and alternative assessment planning and alignment to achievement standards.</li> </ul>					
<b>E.3. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Response to Intervention (RtI)</b> The school summarizes the RtI program and clearly identifies the program components and timelines for student identification.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the specific action steps taken to implement the different tiers of the RtI program by teachers and identifies an administrative lead to oversee the program. (To include: student identification, intervention services, progress monitoring, tiered program entrance and exit.)</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates that procedures are in place to prevent misidentification of students and to refer students for a special education evaluation, if applicable.</li> </ul>					
<b>E.4. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: English Language Learners (ELLs)</b> The school focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of ELL students.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains the type of anticipated ELL community served based on demographic data and their level of support needed.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies whether the applicant's district is under court order to provide mandated services for ELLs, and ensures the program follows the terms of the law, accordingly.</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the plan for meeting the needs of ELL students that supplements the current curriculum and instructional strategies. (To include: qualification process, progress assessments, parent notification, exit strategy and continual program effectiveness evaluation.)</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures cultural sensitivities are integrated into ELL instructional approach.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes school staff and service provider qualifications and training of staff by school or service provider. The student and staff schedules reflect adequate time in the day for services.</li> </ul>						
<b>E.5. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Student: Gifted &amp; Talented Students (G/T)</b>						
The school focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of G/T students.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how curriculum and instruction will be differentiated using research based instructional programs and strategies.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses how students will be identified, how school will improve representation of under-represented groups, how resources will be allocated to include materials, time, qualified staff and training, and how the program will be evaluated for success.</li> </ul>						
<b>E.6. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>						
The school focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of Educationally Disadvantaged students.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of section 504 and ADA laws as defined by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the functional definition of disability, and need for anticipatory accommodations.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses how 504 plans will be prepared and evaluated to ensure that student needs are being met.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses the unique needs of economically disadvantaged and homeless students and accompanying barriers to education by ensuring provisional equal access; including student fee waivers, food and transportation services, uniforms (if applicable) etc., as needed.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines how services will be monitored and evaluated for success.</li> </ul>						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the assessments and intervention strategies it will utilize to ensure low performing students meet grade level expectations and the anticipated areas of support students will need based on local district school performance data.</li> </ul>						
Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students Component	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:		0		

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Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>F. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension</b>						
This section defines how the school intends to handle student discipline and establish a student culture in which all students are able to learn.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafts a Discipline Policy and Procedures Manual that is consistent with the intent and purpose of C.R.S. 22-33-106 and reflects the school culture including definitions of terms, and major and minor levels of infraction. Policy and procedure for expulsion, suspension, continuous education of expelled or suspended students and appeals process are addressed. The draft policy is provided in the Appendix.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the steps the school will take to develop a positive student culture, and address strategies for positive behavior supports, thereby reducing the number of disciplinary infractions and reliance on negative consequences.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains how disciplinary expectations will be communicated to parents/guardians and students and addresses state statutory requirements, policies, processes, due process rights, rituals and protocols of school culture, and how systems, practices, and traditions will be in place from the first day of school.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how the school will handle discipline for students with disabilities to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and 504 regulations to include Manifestation Hearings and Behavior Plans as appropriate.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures that minorities and disabled students are not disproportionately represented in disciplinary matters.</li> </ul>						
<b>Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension Component</b>	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:				0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>G. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance *</b>						
<p><b>This section expands on the Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Performance Standards by defining how the school will determine whether it is meeting its goals. It focuses both on internal assessments used to drive instructional decision-making, as well as external assessments used to communicate academic achievement and growth to stakeholders.</b></p>						
<b>G.1. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Assessments</b>						
The school identifies appropriate internal assessments to evaluate student need and academic program effectiveness, and external assessments to ensure district and state content standards will be met.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes all assessments the school will use to gather baseline data on all students.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures all assessments are aligned with curriculum, instruction, standards and district and state requirements.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes an assessment plan that reflects a comprehensive list of assessments (C.R.S. 22-7-406-409) and a full schedule of administration and timeline. The plan includes provisions for literacy testing, interventions, formative, interim, and summative assessments.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly demonstrates validity and reliability of researched assessments and interventions with the identified population and assures their alignment with the school's vision and mission, which is included in the appendices.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies when and how the school will administer state and federally required assessments.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures assessments and reporting complies with the Colorado accreditation requirements.</li> </ul>						
<b>G.2. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Data Management &amp; Data Support for Teachers</b>						
The school describes its chosen data warehouse system and how it will utilize data to inform and modify curriculum and instruction, professional development, course completion and grade-level advancement.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures these three management 'systems' will be in place and utilized: 1. Student Information System (SIS), 2. Formative/Interim/Summative Assessments, 3. Data Management System.</li> </ul>						



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how the school will use formative, interim and summative assessments to track and ensure students are making progress toward short and long-term goals..</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizes evaluation data to determine the effectiveness of, and provide for continuous improvement to, the academic program and professional development.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan addresses how assessment information will be used to improve instructional practice and content.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly defines a comprehensive plan for taking corrective action, with many examples of interventions and scheduling of additional supports given.</li> </ul>					
<b>G.3. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance: Performance Standards</b>					
The school describes the student performance standards and their use to advance academic performance.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the grading scale for advancement to the next grade level. This includes graduation requirements and course pass requirements.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly describes a plan to monitor progress toward meeting school goals and includes a description of how it will use data to inform modification and improvement processes.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States how it will communicate student academic progress to parents/ guardians, students, and the community.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies trigger points for intervention and procedures for taking corrective action if student performance at the school falls below the described targets.</li> </ul>					
<b>Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>			
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>H. Enrollment Policy and Outreach</b> <b>This section explains how the school will recruit, admit and enroll prospective students and how it will manage the process.</b>						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides enrollment and lottery policies and procedures, key dates, and a description that specifies that enrollment is available to all students, consistent with C.R.S 22-30.5-104(3) and state rule. Includes notice of enrollment preferences given to any specific groups, and how those groups are defined.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides a marketing plan that describes strategic distribution of school information community wide.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demonstrates a vast array of outreach activities to appeal to a diverse student population, families and community members.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides a timeline that reflects ongoing outreach, student recruitment, next steps, and the current number of intent to enroll forms.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Open enrollment, lottery and annual deadline dates are clearly articulated and an equal opportunity to enroll is evident in the enrollment procedures for the school. A sample of the intent to enroll form is included as an attachment.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describes the student enrollment management process that tracks intent to enroll forms, notification procedures, and process for withdrawals, and transfer of student records.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describes a non-discriminatory enrollment procedure that ensures equal access for exceptional and educationally disadvantaged students.</li></ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demonstrates that the lottery and enrollment policy are consistent with federal CSP Non-regulatory Guidance and RFP eligibility requirements, if reliant on CSP grant funds.</li></ul>						
<b>Enrollment Policy &amp; Outreach Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>I. Governance *</b>						
This section provides detailed information on the governance philosophy and how the board will approach its oversight role, the role and make-up of the board and the role of the school's administration in carrying out the school's vision and mission.						
<b>I.1. Governance: Governing Board</b>						
The school provides detailed information on the governance philosophy and board make-up						
The school:						
• Describes how the vision and mission will guide the board in everyday practice and decision making.						
• Describes a plan to recruit highly qualified board members, the election process, decision making process and membership terms; the current and optimal number of members, composition of the board of directors,, and identified skill sets.						
• Ensures board membership reflects diverse experiences and skills (such as education, management, financial planning, law and community outreach), including experience with charter school leadership.						
• Describes an ongoing comprehensive plan, training calendar and budget for board training and continuous improvement.						
• Describes ongoing committees and functions that will be put into place and their roles, along with a plan for meaningful involvement of parents and community members in the governance of the school.						
• Provides board member biographies in the application and all board members' resumes are included as an attachment.						
• Ensures the board conducts an annual self-evaluation of function and effectiveness and uses the results to identify areas for growth and professional development.						
<b>I.2. Governance: Legal Status &amp; Governing Documents</b>						
The school describes the legal status of the school and the status of the completion of state statute requirements, school By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation and policies. Policies and procedures are defined and align to the vision and mission of the school and support student achievement						
The school provides:						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a letter of non-profit status (if available) and includes Articles of Incorporation,</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a description of Bylaws in the narrative that is appropriate to the structure of the organization, and includes a copy of the bylaws,</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a draft or final conflict of interest policy that meets statutory requirements,</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a policy for hearing parent, staff and student grievances, as an Appendix.</li> </ul>					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a complete explanation of the steps the school will take to remain in compliance with ongoing legislation, including the Open Meetings Act (C.R.S. 24-6-401), the Colorado Public Records Act (C.R.S. 24-72-201), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. Sect. 1232), and the Colorado Non-profit Act (C.R.S. 7-121-101 et. seq.)</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of statutory requirements on School Accountability Committees (CRS 22-11-401 to 406) with regard to its makeup and duties, and commits to forming such a committee upon the school's opening.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a list of the school's primary governance and operational policies that the board has either already adopted or will adopt prior to the school's opening, as well as additional policies needed to ensure the sound governance and operations of the school.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has school bylaws and/or board policies that require annual signing of Conflict of Interest policies by board members.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures all board members will sign, or have already signed, a Board Member Agreement, and a draft of the agreement is attached.</li> </ul>					
<b>I.3. Governance: Oversight of Operations</b>					
The school outlines the overall roles and responsibilities of leadership and its organization and hiring plans to include a process of oversight and evaluation of administration, achievement and finance.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the primary responsibilities of the school administration and governing board and demonstrates a thorough and clear understanding of the differences in roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes a leadership transition plan to ensure smooth transfer of responsibilities from founders to administration and operations board.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents an organizational plan that clearly defines the relationship between the board, the lead administrator, committees or advisory groups, and explains how the board will interact with and evaluate the school leader.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes lead administrator qualifications and a rigorous hire process. A job description is attached in the Appendix.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures a plan is in place to hire a school leader who is experienced with the target student population, leading a school or team, developing and sustaining community and parent relations, and distributing leadership among its faculty.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes a system for how and when the board will evaluate the school leader and use this information to analyze the leader's need for coaching and professional development. Ensures an internal and external evaluation plan is in place to regularly monitor key financial, student achievement, and school culture information with clear protocols for receiving metrics and progress indicators in the form of a dashboard or similar reporting format.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the board oversight of the budget setting process in accordance with C.R.S. 22-30.5-111.7(1)(a) and timeline.</li> </ul>					
<b>Governance Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>			
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
J. Evidence of Support *						
This section provides supporting data and a clear description of the target population, demand for the school and community support for the proposed program.						
The school:						
• Clearly describes the targeted student population and has provided aggregated student population projections based on publicly available demographic data (including racial/cultural, socioeconomic, special needs, ELLs, and achievement data) for the proposed school’s area and comparable schools.						
• Sufficiently demonstrates a need and interest in the school community wide and has provided aggregate demographic data for families interested in enrolling in the school.						
• Demonstrates research regarding number of new schools opening in the area and adjusts enrollment projections accordingly.						
• Provides sufficient evidence of parent and pupil support (C.R.S.22-30.5-106d) to include numbers of Letters of Intent to Enroll.						
• Provides evidence of community member and leader support, and any service partnerships, including their role in the school pre and post school opening. Letters of Support or draft Service Agreements are provided in the Appendix.						
Evidence of Support Component	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>K. Parent &amp; Community Involvement</b>						
This section addresses the roles parents/guardians, community members, and community organizations will play as part of the school community.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides strong evidence to demonstrate parent/guardian and community involvement in all phases of the school's development.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains the parent/guardian engagement plan that provides opportunities for parents to partner with the school to strengthen and support student learning, school culture and operations.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies community resources and partnerships that will benefit students and parent/guardian, including a) description of the nature, purpose, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships; and b) evidence of commitment from identified community partners by MOUs or Letters of Intent in the Appendix.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a variety of volunteer opportunities parents/guardians can access during traditional and nontraditional school hours.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes communication pathways and strategies to make timely school information accessible to all potential and involved families including at-risk.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies an evaluation process to determine parent/guardian satisfaction with the school. A plan and timeline is in place to respond to feedback</li> </ul>						
<b>Parent &amp; Community Involvement Component</b>	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:				0

Standard Application Review Rubric							
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment	
<b>L. Budget &amp; Finance *</b>							
<b>This section details the school's budget and fiscal policies and management.</b>							
<b>L.1. Budget &amp; Finance: Budget Narrative</b>							
The school provides financial narrative that includes a description of the school start-up plan, services and specific programming for both the academic and non-academic program, and any other areas of service that are unique to the school model and its vision and mission							
The school's:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget narrative clearly explains revenue and cost assumptions and how they were obtained from reliable sources.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget narrative accounts for basic startup costs, facility funding, FFE acquisition, curriculum, professional development and school growth with appropriate projections and timeline.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget is maximized to meet the vision and mission and the programs described in each section of the application.</li> </ul>							
The school:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures projected student population growth is adequate to meet long range plans for the chosen school model, staffing and facility needs. Projections are conservative and are based on realistic data.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues (PPR) are not received or are lower than estimated.</li> </ul>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of financial implications of employment law and operations, including tax, payroll, retirement, insurance and background check requirements.</li> </ul>							
<b>L.2. Budget &amp; Finance: 5 Year Budget</b>							
The budget is submitted as an Appendix to the application. The five year budget is balanced, follows district and specific statutory requirements, and adheres to the Authorizer's budget template guidelines.							
The school:							



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a complete, realistic, and viable start-up and 5-year balanced operating budget that aligns with the educational, organizational, and school growth plans as described in each section of the application, along with a cash flow chart for the first year of operation.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes appropriate PERA and TABOR amounts.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates an understanding of financial implications of employment law and operations and has funds in place regarding tax, payroll, retirement insurance, and background check requirements.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates need awareness, plan and resources for available cash on hand prior to school opening and reimbursement grants.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates that budget expenditures will not exceed available funds for any given year.</li> </ul>					
<b>L.3. Budget &amp; Finance: Systems &amp; Procedures</b>  Systems and procedures are in place to ensure that the school and its Board follow sound financial practices that provide financial stability and appropriate allocation in the fulfilling of its vision and mission.					
The school:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a clear understanding of and compliance with the Financial Transparency Act (C.R.S. 22-44-301 <i>et seq</i>) and has provided sample financial templates and reports as an attachment.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how the school will meet District budget reporting requirements throughout the year.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the process to contract with a Certified Public Accountant to conduct an annual, independent financial audit.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains how the school will comply with any GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) provisions and adhere to generally acceptable accounting practices.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides financial policies and procedures and a management plan that the board and administration will implement and follow to ensure that the school remains fiscally solvent.</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal controls are implemented to ensure a sound financial management system that includes checks and balances in cash disbursement and oversight.</li> </ul>					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures financial policies, procedures and spending priorities are aligned with the vision and mission, school goals and growth, curriculum, and professional development plans.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies an evaluation or internal audit process for financial spending decisions that are based on a data-driven needs assessment, and mission alignment; included in the appendices.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a description of the back office financial service provider, along with qualifications.</li> </ul>						
<b>Budget &amp; Finance Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>				0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>M. Facilities *</b>						
<b>This section provides information on the school's short and long-term facility plans.</b>						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a 4-year facility needs assessment that includes square foot needs per student/space, and cost/sq. ft. that is adequate to implement the school program and mission.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the target location for the school building, geographical boundaries and timeline for acquisition of a permanent or temporary site. The name of the professional service agency the school is using is included.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides evidence of good market assumptions and a least two sites and cost association.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents a reasonable and appropriate timeline that includes a contingency plan for securing or completing the school facility.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a plan that reflects reasonable financing and costs associated with the development and operation of the school facility with evidence that the secured or proposed sites will not exceed 18% of the school budget.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures that the facility will maintain compliance with C.R.S. 22-32-124 and all applicable codes, health and safety laws and ADA requirements, as well as, any construction permits and building and fire safety inspections that need to be obtained.</li> </ul>						
<b>Facility Component</b>	<b>Weight:</b>	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>N.1. Transportation</b>						
This section addresses whether the school plans to offer any transportation services to students and if not, describes how students' transportation needs will be met without transportation services.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a clear description (if applicable) of any student transportation services it will offer that complies with state and federal regulations for all transportation needs. The school includes in its transportation plan whether services will be provided directly or through the district, a collaborative, or other outside organization.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a transportation plan that fully meets the needs of low-income and low achieving students.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflects a commitment to meet the transportation needs of students with IEPs, 504s, and/or homeless students that require transportation services.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a budget that accurately reflects the cost of providing student transportation and insurance, and addresses safety needs using private, public, or school vehicles.</li> </ul>						
Transportation Component	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>N.2. Food Service</b>						
<b>This section addresses whether the school plans to offer food service to its students.</b>						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a clear description (if applicable) of student food services that complies with state and federal regulations for in order to meet all student food service needs. The school includes in its food service plan whether services will be provided directly or through the district, a collaborative, or other outside organization.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers food programs under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (if applicable), and has designated an authorized School Food Authority and created a plan of its requisites. FRL applications and USDA food preparation and facility requirements are addressed.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures that students who cannot provide or have forgotten their lunch will be accommodated during school and extended day programs.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a budget that accurately reflects reasonable costs associated with implementing student food services, including all expenses and revenues.</li> </ul>						
<b>Food Service Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>			0	

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>O. Employees</b>						
This section provides a variety of information on the school's employees and employment policies, and the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees.						
<b>O.1. Employees: Staff Hiring</b>						
The school describes a process of hiring skilled faculty and staff that is aligned to the school's vision and mission, and provides the qualities and qualifications for each position at the school.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the recruiting and hiring process and includes how positions will be publicized, any standards that will be used, and the timeline. Teacher qualifications must be aligned to section 1119 of ESEA requirements for Highly Qualified teachers.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides job descriptions for all key employees, including teachers and administrative staff included with a clear delineation of the role of the head administrator in the area of employee hiring, evaluation and firing.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains how the school classifies its employees and how this is communicated when hiring. If all of the school's employees will be "at-will," the application provides a definition of what this means.</li> </ul>						
<b>O.2. Employees: Management &amp; Evaluation</b>						
The school describes a comprehensive and consistent evaluation plan that is aligned with the school's vision and mission, goals, curriculum, assessment, academic expectations, and professional development of staff.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures formal annual evaluations, with a mid-year progress check, of its faculty and staff are conducted to inform and improve the educational program, organizational performance and support academic progress.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes how school leadership and instructional staff plan to use internal and external assessment results to obtain information on student learning, achievement gaps, and instruction for the purpose of identifying goals for professional development and improvement in professional practice.</li> </ul>						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time and duties allotted for faculty and staff performance observations within the position description for administrative staff.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive evaluation of teacher effectiveness is tied to student academic performance. The teacher evaluation rubrics are included in the appendices C.R.S. 22-9-106.</li> </ul>						
<b>O.3. Employees: School Structure, Policies &amp; Procedures</b>						
The school has structures, policies, and procedures in place that will be used to guide the school administration.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an Employee Handbook referenced in the Appendix. If a Handbook is unavailable, a summary of the school's proposed policies and procedures is included in the narrative with a timeline for completing the Handbook. Proposed policies and procedures include grievance and conflict of interest policies.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an organizational chart that shows position/title and year a position will be added as the school grows to full capacity over the first five years of the school. The narrative describes who is responsible for employment decisions and oversight at each level of the organization.</li> </ul>						
<b>Employees Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>				0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>P. Insurance Coverage</b>						
<b>In this section the school clearly demonstrates that it will meet all applicable insurance requirements and procedures, with reasonable assumptions for the cost, to protect itself, staff and students.</b>						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the process the school will use to create and maintain an emergency management plan. This plan reviews forming safety teams (see C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(2) and (4)(d)(I)), appointing a designated crisis response spokesperson, and establishing a claims management follow-up process.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures General Liability policies at a minimum of \$2,000,000 per occurrence/wrongful act that cover at least the following: Bodily Injury; Property Damage; and Abuse and Molestation.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures coverage of Workers' Compensation as required by state law (C.R.S. 8-40-202).</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures liability insurance policies at a minimum of \$1,000,000, per occurrence/wrongful act that covers at least the following: officers and directors; employee errors and omissions; Crime and Fiduciary Liability; Student Accident; Off-campus activities, including field trips, program specific needs, and sporting events; Cyber Liability, including social media exposures.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides quotes or adequate cost information for the above policies and have been included in the budget and appendix, where applicable, and show reasonable assumptions.</li> </ul>						
<b>Insurance Coverage Component</b>	<b>Weight:</b>	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>				0



Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>R. Waivers</b>						
This section includes statements acknowledging a commitment to comply with all laws and policies that are not waived and a list of non-automatic proposed state and district waivers. The requested waivers should match the proposed autonomy, school vision and mission, goals, operations, governance, and employment relationships of the proposed charter school.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a list of all state statutes or rules for which waivers are being requested, including waivers that are considered automatic (C.R.S. 22-30.5-(1.5)(a-c)).</li> </ul>						
Provides a rationale and replacement plan for all non-automatic waiver requests that describes how it will meet the intent of the statute (C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(6)).						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents a list of district policies for which waivers are being requested, a rationale or purpose for requesting each waiver, and a draft replacement policy or explains the replacement plan that the school will adopt.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outlines the expected financial and implementation impact of each waiver, as well as, how the effectiveness of the waiver will be evaluated.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulates and requests waivers that are in alignment with its proposed autonomy, mission, goals, operations, governance, and employment policies.</li> </ul>						
<b>Waivers Component</b>	Weight:	Average Raw Score:				
		Total Weighted Score:		0		

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>Q. Dispute Resolution Process</b> This section reflects the school's understanding of and compliance with C.R.S. 22-30.5-107.5, which explains how the school and its authorizer agree to resolve disputes that may arise concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract.						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a dispute resolution plan that demonstrates reasonable method(s) for resolving disagreements that arise between a charter school and its authorizer, concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates a clear understanding for and compliance with statutory requirements for a dispute resolution process (C.R.S.22-30.5-107.5) for both the charter school and the authorizer. This includes a process to reach an agreement within 30 days of receipt of notice.</li> </ul>						
<b>Dispute Resolution Process Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>				0

Standard Application Review Rubric						
Component Description & Quality Design Criteria	(4) Exceeds Criteria	(3) Adequately Addresses Criteria	(1) Partially Addresses Criteria	(0) Does Not Address Criteria	(N/A) Not Applicable	Score & Comment
<b>S. School Management Contracts</b> <b>This section, if applicable, should explain and justify the proposed charter school's intent to contract with an Education Service Provider (such as a charter management organization (CMO), education management organization (EMO), or any other type of school management or service provider) to provide, manage, or oversee all or substantially all of the educational services provided by the charter school.</b>						
The school:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains why it is choosing to engage an Education Management Provider and how the selected provider will meet its needs.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides evidence that the provider has been successful in the academic and/or business operation aspects of other schools, including demonstrated academic achievement with the target population, as well as successful management of non-academic school functions. References and explanation of any contract terminations, non-renewals or non-openings are included.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides explanation and evidence demonstrating the desired provider has capacity to take on the needs of this school, while also maintaining quality for its existing schools.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures decision making authority and responsibility of the charter school governing board (C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(b)) over the provider, explains any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the governing board and an external education management provider, and ensures the charter school governing board maintains the ability to sever the relationship. Describes the terms of the management contract with a draft or final contract submitted as an Appendix. Terms include cost, length of contract, proprietary ownership of assets, process to evaluate performance, oversee, renew, or terminate contract, terms and conditions upon termination of the contract, clear evidence that the service provider is authorized to conduct business in Colorado, and to whom the provider reports.</li> </ul>						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a clear understanding of the financial obligations both of and to the service provider, including the providers' compensation structure and all fees the school will pay, and ensures any/all employee hiring and insurance obligations are outlined in the provider agreement.</li> </ul>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures a separate agreement is in place for building ownership or lease if developers are making payments to the service provider.</li> </ul>						
<b>School Management Contracts Component</b>	Weight:	<b>Average Raw Score:</b>				
		<b>Total Weighted Score:</b>				0

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### Charter Application Overall Assessment

This section gives the application reviewer an opportunity to provide general feedback about their overall impression of the Charter Application.

Overall Comments:

Overall Assessment			Overall Score:	
			Total Score Possible:	