

**Ector County ISD**

**2017-18 Local Campus Partnership  
Application**

## Introduction

TEC Chapter 12 establishes charter schools for the following purposes:

- Improve student learning;
- increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public-school system;
- create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public-school system;
- establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and
- encourage different and innovative learning methods.

TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C states that the board of trustees (the “Board”) may grant a charter to the following:

- A new District Campus or Program—TEC §12.0521(a)(1).
- A new or existing Program operated by an Educational Service Provider (ESP) — TEC §12.0521(a)(2).
- An existing Campus (or campuses) with less than 15 percent of the student population or one entire feeder pattern — TEC §12.0522. Charters granted under this section are subject to Subchapter D and the campus is considered to be an “open-enrollment charter school” but is not subject to the cap.
- An existing Campus (or campuses) or Program that petition for a charter — TEC §§12.052, 12.053. (Charters under this section are granted to “parents and teachers” and require a petition signed by a majority of the parents and teachers at each campus.)

## Charter Application Eligibility

The Board shall consider an application for a Campus charter or Program charter if the applicant:

- Meets the eligibility requirements for a Campus charter or Program charter set forth in TEC §12.052, §12.0521, §12.0522, and §12.053;
- follows the application process established by the District; and
- Provides evidence to the Board that the applicant will comply with the statutory and District requirements for a campus charter or program charter.

The Board welcomes applications for a Campus charter or Program charter (“Subchapter C charter”) pursuant to various paths as set forth in TEC Chapter 39, Subchapter C. The Board specifically invites and encourages applications pursuant to TEC §12.0521.

Regardless of authorization path, all groups and entities seeking to create a Subchapter C charter shall follow the Charter Application and Review Process set forth in this document.

## Charter Application Process Overview

The application process shall include:

1. A comprehensive written application submitted by each charter school applicant in accordance with application guidance and requirements provided by the Board;

2. a rigorous review of the written application conducted by an independent evaluation team (“Evaluation Team”) of at least three internal and/or external evaluators;
3. a capacity interview with the applicant group conducted by the Evaluation Team (optional but recommended);
4. a formal recommendation from the Superintendent to the Board for approval or denial of each application, based on evidence from the Evaluation Team’s evaluation of the application; and
5. a formal vote by the Board to approve or deny each application, following deliberation of the Superintendent’s recommendation in a public meeting.

**Standard of Review.** The Board shall conduct a rigorous, evidence-based, and merit-focused evaluation of charter applications, including evaluating the proposed charter school’s capacity to meet the Board’s established academic, financial, operational, and governance standards for charter schools. The Board shall grant a charter only in cases in which the Board determines that the proposed school is likely to:

1. Succeed in meeting academic, financial, operational, and governance standards, thereby meeting both performance and legal compliance expectations for charter schools in the District;
2. serve the best interests of the targeted students and community; and
3. fulfill the purposes and intent of Texas’s charter school law.

**Evaluation criteria are presented as Exhibit A at the end of this document.**

**In evaluating the merits of the charter application, the Board shall not consider the potential fiscal impact of the charter on the District.**

## 2017-18 Request for Proposals Timeline

Milestones — Due Dates for 2018
<b>Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Determination</b>
<b>Deadline for Mandatory Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Demonstration — Feb. 15th</b> To be eligible to submit a full proposal, all interested parties must submit the mandatory LOI and accompanying eligibility documentation. Conversion schools must also submit their proof of support at this time. Eligibility packets must be prepared using the documents provided.
<b>Eligibility Determinations — February</b> The Board will review the LOI packet for each applicant and issue a determination on eligibility. Applicants deemed ineligible will be disqualified from submitting a full proposal in this cycle.
<b>Application</b>
<b>Deadline for Complete Proposals — February 28<sup>th</sup></b> All proposals must be submitted in complete and final form by this date. Incomplete proposals, including those that are only partially uploaded, will be disqualified from this cycle.
<b>Independent Evaluation Team Review</b>
<b>Evaluation Team Proposal Review — March/April</b> Evaluation Teams will review each proposal.
<b>Capacity Interviews — March/April</b> Capacity interviews are conducted at the discretion of the District. They are optional but recommended. They are not open to the public.
<b>Formal Recommendation from Superintendent to Board — March/April</b>
<b>Board Vote — April Board Meeting</b>

## Applicant Types

In this RFP cycle, two types of applicants will be considered, each with specific requirements.

**New Operators**, including a university that does not currently hold a charter in good standing or a nonprofit organization, which:

- has been formed by parents, teachers, or community members for the purpose of applying for a campus charter;
- has never operated a charter school; and
- does not intend to employ an ESP **or** intends to employ an ESP that has not operated a school for more than one year (regardless of location).

**Existing Operators**, including nonprofit organizations or universities, which:

- have one or more schools in operation nationwide which have been in operation for more than one full school year.

**All applicants must complete Sections 1 – 3 of the application. New Operators partnering with an ESP, and Existing Operators must also complete Section 4.**

## Instructions

The Board is pleased to invite proposals for new quality charter schools seeking to open in Fall 2018 (or thereafter). Prior to developing a proposal, please read this entire RFP.

## Components of the Proposal

- Narrative Proposal: The proposal is the formal application to the Board and is a comprehensive description of the school's educational, operational, and financial plans.
- Attachments: Throughout the proposal, specific documents are requested in addition to narrative answers. Attachments may not contain additional narrative unless specified. A comprehensive list of the attachments is provided in these instructions.
- Capacity Interview(s) (at the discretion of the District): Applicants may have the opportunity to present their plan and demonstrate the team's capacity to open and maintain a high-quality charter school, as well as to answer specific questions about their proposal.

## Specifications

- Applicants **must** submit proposals electronically and use the applicable templates:
- All templates are available on the District's website.
- All elements of the proposal must have 1-inch margins in 12-point font, single-spaced.
- Each major section of the proposal (School Summary, Educational Program, etc.) and each attachment must begin on a separate page, as indicated in the template document. Adhere to all page limits as indicated.
- If you believe a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, respond "Not Applicable" **and** state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal.
- All required documents should be uploaded in the file format specified.
- Late or incorrectly formatted submissions will not be accepted.
- When submitting résumés, label each document with the individual's affiliation with the proposed school (e.g., board member, principal, etc.).

## Attachments

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

1. Graduation standards (for high school only)
2. Enrollment policy
3. Discipline policy
4. Organization charts
5. Board documents
6. Board member information
7. Leadership team qualifications
8. School leader qualifications
9. Start-up and five-year operating budget
10. Financial plan narrative

Existing operators and applicants partnering with an ESP, as applicable:

1. Evidence of portfolio performance (for existing operators or applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)
2. Most recent annual report and audit (for existing operators or applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)
3. Proposed management agreement with ESP (for applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)

## Applicant Code of Conduct

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

Specifically, charter school applicants shall not:

- Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a Trustee;
- initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a member of the Evaluation Team; or
- direct any communications, including proposal documents, to a Trustee or to a member of the Evaluation Team.

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

## Public Disclosure

All charter school proposal materials submitted to the Board become public records.

## 2017-18 Request for Proposals for Subchapter C Charters

**Please submit an application that addresses the following questions / issues.** There are no page limits for individual sections except for the School Summary. The total narrative response may not exceed 25 pages (not including the requested attachments).

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

**All applicants must complete Sections 1 – 3 of the application. Existing charter operators and New Operators proposing to partner with an ESP are also required to complete Section 4.**

### **Plagiarism**

The Texas State University Student Handbook defines plagiarism as “the appropriation of another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work” (Texas State University Student Handbook). Individuals and groups seeking the right and responsibility to educate public school children at public expense should be accountable to the highest standards of academic integrity. The Board considers plagiarism, including the copying of language from any other charter application without proper attribution, as grounds for immediate denial.

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

## Applicant Information

<b>Name of Applicant Organization</b>	
<b>Primary Contact Person</b>	
<b>Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Phone Number</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

**Names, current jobs and employers, and proposed roles of all persons on applicant team**  
*(Add lines as needed)*

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School

**We plan to apply as a:**

- ☐ New Operator  
 (includes an ESP with less than one year of experience)
                         
 ☐ Existing Operator  
 (ESP or open enrollment charter)

**Which type of Subchapter C charter best describes this application?**

- ☐ A new District Campus or Program  
☐ A new or existing Program operated by an ESP (If so, identify the provider here)  
☐ An existing Campus (or Campuses) with less than 15% of the student population or one entire feeder pattern  
☐ An existing Campus (or Campuses) or Program that petitions for a charter

**Does this applicant team have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the United States?**

- ☐ Yes
   
 ☐ No

**If Yes, complete the table below** *(Add lines as needed)*

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date

**Does this applicant team have new schools or campuses scheduled to open in the United States in the next five years?**

- ☐ Yes
   
 ☐ No

**If Yes, complete the table below** *(Add lines as needed)*



Planned School Name	City	State	Opening Date

## School Information

**NOTE: Complete this part for each school / campus included in this proposal.**  
**Duplicate as needed.**

Proposed School / Campus Name	Opening Year	Grades: Year 1	Grades: At Capacity
<b>Proposed Location</b>			
<b>School District</b> <i>Identify the school district in which the charter school will be located.</i>			
<b>Address of Identified Facility</b> <i>If applicable.</i>			
<b>Projected Demographic Information</b>	<b>% FRL:</b>	<b>% SpEd:</b>	<b>% ELL:</b>
<b>Model / Specialty</b> <i>(Check all that apply)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative	<input type="checkbox"/> Career / Technical Ed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Montessori
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> College Prep	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Immersion	<input type="checkbox"/> STEM
<input type="checkbox"/> Blended Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(list):</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability <i>(list):</i>	

<b>Name of Proposed Principal</b>	
<b>Current Employment</b>	
<b>Phone Number – Day</b>	
<b>Phone Number – Evening</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

## School Overview

### Executive Summary (Limit: 2 Pages)

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

1. **Mission and Vision.** State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement describes how the school will operate and what success looks like for students. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal, and taken together, should identify the students and community to be served and illustrate what success for students will look like.
2. **Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population.** Describe the anticipated student population, students anticipated educational needs, and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and targeting this student population.
3. **Education Plan / School Design.** Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies, and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.
4. **Leadership and Governance.** List the current members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current professional affiliations.

*Add lines to the following table, as needed. Do not list members of the applicant team who will not have an official leadership role with the school going forward, such as consultants.*

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School

## Enrollment Summary (Limit: 2 Pages)

1. Complete the table below, illustrating the growth plan for the school. Indicate the school year (e.g., for Year 1, change 20xx to 2019) for each column.

**Note: Remove any rows for grades the school will not serve.**

2. Then, describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in Year 1 and the basis for the growth plan as outlined in the table.

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

# Texas Subchapter C Charter Proposal

(Limit to 25 pages for narrative, not including attachments)

## Section 1 — Educational Program Design

### Program Overview

1. Summarize the education program, including primary instructional methods and assessment strategies, and any non-negotiable elements of the school model. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population.

### Curriculum and Instructional Design

1. Propose a framework for instructional design that both reflects the needs of the anticipated population and ensures that all students will meet or exceed relevant state standards.
2. Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use and why those strategies are well-suited for the anticipated student population. Describe the methods and systems teachers will use to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
3. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.
4. Describe how the curriculum will comply with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards.

### High School Graduation Requirements

**Note: For schools serving grades 9 – 12 only.**

1. Provide, as **Attachment 1**, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.
2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities (e.g., trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).
3. Discuss the systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting these requirements.

### School Culture

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school.
2. Explain the plan to create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents, starting from the first day of school.

### Special Populations and At-Risk Students

1. Describe the plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to: students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans, English Language Learners (ELLs), students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Identify the special populations that the school expects to serve, and the basis for these assumptions, whether through data related to a specific

school or district, or a more generalized analysis of the population to be served. Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of students.

2. Specifically describe the plan to identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide, including the following:
  - a. Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);
  - b. specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, ensure access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with special education needs;
  - c. plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the IEP; and
  - d. plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (*high schools only*).
3. Explain how the school will meet the needs of ELL students, including the following:
  - a. Methods for identifying ELL students (and avoiding misidentification);
  - b. specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students; and
  - c. plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services.
4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:
  - a. Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their experience; and
  - b. plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of these students.

## Student Recruitment and Enrollment

1. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically, describe the plans for outreach to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 2**, the school's Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:
  - a. A statement that admission will not be based on national origin, ethnicity, race, or disability;
  - b. tentative dates for application period, and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including explanation of how the school will receive and process applications;
  - c. description of how the school will comply with TEC §12.065 which states that the school must give priority on the basis of geographical and residency considerations, then, if there is still available space, consider age, grade level, or academic credentials, generally or specifically depending on the type of program offered;
  - d. description of how the school will comply with TEC §12.0521 which states that

- enrollment in a Subchapter C charter school must be voluntary; and
- e. policies and procedures for waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

## Student Discipline

1. If already developed, provide the proposed discipline policy as **Attachment 3**. If a proposed discipline policy is not available, describe in detail the school's approach to student discipline. Taken together, the narrative description and/or discipline policy should:
  - a. Explain the practices the school will use to promote discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
  - b. list and define the offenses for which students must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled;
  - c. explain how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities, including students with Behavior Support Plans in disciplinary actions and proceedings; and
  - d. explain procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than 10 days.

## Performance Measures

1. Describe the annual performance goals for which the school will be held accountable, such as student progress and achievement levels, closing achievement gaps, post-secondary readiness, and community/student engagement.

## Assessment & Evaluation

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

## Section 2 — Governance, Operations Plan & Capacity

### Organization Chart

1. Submit, as **Attachment 4**, an organization chart that shows the school governance, management, and staffing structure in the first year of school operations. The organization chart should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of, and lines of authority and reporting among, the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization chart should also specifically document lines of authority and reporting within the school.

### Legal Status and Governing Documents

1. Describe the proposed school's legal status, including non-profit status and federal tax-exempt status.
2. Provide, if applicable, as **Attachment 5**:
  - a. The bylaws of the governing board, including any amendments;
  - b. the code of ethics and conflict of interest policies; and
  - c. the completed and signed statement of assurances (prepared using the template provided by the Board).

### Governing Board

1. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles, powers, and duties of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and its independence from the Board (authorizer) and other entities.
2. Describe the current and desired size and composition of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that are and/or will be represented on the governing board.
3. List all current and prospective governing board members and their intended roles. For each individual identified, summarize interest in and qualifications to serve on the board. Provide, as **Attachment 6**, the following documents for each individual identified here: a completed and signed Board Member Information Sheet, résumé, and proof of U.S. citizenship. (If a board member's documentation is attached elsewhere in this proposal or was submitted with the LOI, state so on the Information Sheet.)
4. If this proposal is being submitted by a pre-existing non-profit organization respond to the following:
  - a. Was the pre-existing non-profit formed for a purpose other than operating schools? If so, please provide the mission of the organization and explain how operating charter schools serves that mission.
  - b. Will the pre-existing non-profit board govern the new school, or will a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board hold the charter?
  - c. If the non-profit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.
  - d. If a new board has been or will be formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board will be.



## Application Team Capacity

1. Identify the key members of the school's leadership team. Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success. These may include governing board members, volunteers, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school's development and operation.
2. Describe the other team members' individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as: administration, financial management, governance, curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions, explain why each is well-qualified for a specific role, and summarize their relevant track record of success. Provide, as **Attachment 7**, the qualifications, résumés, and proof of U.S. citizenship for each identified individual.
3. Identify the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well-qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school. Discuss the evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population. This evidence may include annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of the leader or other administrator. Also provide, as **Attachment 8**, the qualifications, résumé, and proof of U.S. Citizenship for this individual.

– OR –

If no candidate has been identified, discuss the process and timeline for recruiting, selecting, and hiring the school leader. Describe the criteria to be used in selecting this leader and, instead, provide as **Attachment 8** a complete job description and required qualifications.

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

## Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

1. Describe the employment status of school personnel, including the principal, teachers, and other instructional and non-instructional school-based staff. The response should clarify if school staff will be employees of the District or the applicant organization.
2. Describe the strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring teaching staff. Explain required qualifications for instructional staff, key selection criteria, and any special considerations relevant to your school design.
3. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.
4. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated. Will the school use the T-TESS framework? If you intend to supplement or use an alternative to T-TESS, outline the tools and key inputs. *If you intend to use only T-TESS, **do not** include the mandated assessment tools. Likewise, **do not** include copied and pasted materials from online*

*resources, such as copies of the Danielson framework.*

5. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Will the school use the T-PESS framework? If you intend to supplement or use an alternative to T-PESS, outline the tools and key inputs. *If you intend to use only T-PESS, **do not** include the mandated assessment tools. Likewise, **do not** include copied and pasted materials from online resources, such as copies of the Danielson framework.*
6. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.

## Professional Development

1. Identify the person(s) or position(s) responsible for overseeing professional development (PD).
2. Discuss the core components of the school's PD plan and how they will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which PD will be individualized or uniform. Who will be responsive for administering PD programs (e.g., a staff member, consultant, etc.)?
3. Provide an explanation of PD that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.
4. Describe the expected number of days/hours for PD throughout the school year and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and discuss how such time will typically be used.

## Facilities

1. If you are seeking an existing public school facility, please identify the school name and address.
2. If you plan on opening a school in an independent facility, describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. Include in this discussion the plan for ensuring that identified facilities will comply with applicable state and local health and safety requirements and applicable planning review procedures.

## Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

1. Describe the plan for managing the transition and/or start-up of the charter school, including who will be responsible.
2. Does the school intend to purchase any services, such as transportation, food service, or janitorial service from the District? If so, please specify. If not certain, briefly describe process for finalizing plans with the District. *Note that Subchapter C charters are not required to purchase services from the District. This decision shall not influence charter decisions.*

## Section 3 — Financial Plan

### Financial Plan

1. Describe the systems, policies, and processes the school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.
2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finances and distinguish between each.
3. Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual financial report.
4. Submit a completed start-up and five-year operating budget as **Attachment 9**
5. As **Attachment 10**, present a detailed description of assumptions, calculations, and revenue estimates. The narrative should include, at minimum, the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. Provide specific evidence supporting assumptions and/or describe the source of estimated amounts wherever possible.

## Section 4 — Existing Charter Operator & ESP Information (if applicable)

This section is required of every operator, new and existing, that proposes school operation or management via contract with a third-party ESP, **and** existing charter operators applying to operate a district campus. Complete each section as applicable. All applicable sections of this section **must** be completed for the proposal as a whole to be deemed complete. If an applicant believes that a question in this section is not applicable to their proposal, the applicant should so state **and** explain why the applicant believes the particular question does not apply. If a question has been thoroughly answered earlier in the narrative proposal, the applicant should so state **and** reference the section, question number, and page number. If an applicant is unsure as to whether a particular section is required, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Board for guidance.

### Existing Charter Operator Information Performance Track Record

1. Provide, as **Attachment 11**, information on the performance of all schools operated by the applicant using the template provided.
2. Provide evidence of the financial health of the charter applicant. Provide as **Attachment 12** the most recent independent financial audit report of the charter applicant and its most recent annual report.
3. List and explain any management contract terminations, as well as any charter revocations, non-renewals, or withdrawals/non-openings that the proposed charter applicant has experienced in the past five (5) years.

**Note: End of section for existing charter operators.**

## ESP Information

*An ESP is any third-party entity that provides comprehensive education management services to a school **via contract** with the governing board. (In essence, an ESP does not propose to hold the charter but rather to contract with the charter holder.)*

## Performance Track Record

1. Provide, as **Attachment 11**, information on the performance of all schools operated by the ESP using the template provided.
2. Provide summary information from reference checks conducted by the applicant regarding the third-party ESP, identifying each reference.
3. Provide evidence of the financial health of the ESP. Attach as **Attachment 12** the most recent independent financial audit report of the ESP and its most recent annual report.
4. List and explain any management contract terminations, as well as any charter revocations, non-renewals, or withdrawals/non-openings that the proposed ESP has experienced in the past five (5) years.

## ESP Selection

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

## Legal Relationship with ESP

1. Provide evidence that the governing board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including evidence of independent legal representation and arm's-length negotiating.
2. Describe any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the governing board, proposed school employees, proposed ESP, and any affiliated business entities.
3. List all subsidiaries or related entities that are affiliated or owned in whole or in part by the ESP and identify the nature of those entities' business activities.
4. Explain whether the school has or will have any relationship with or receive any services from any of the entities listed in the previous question.
5. Explain the supervisory responsibilities of the ESP (if any), including which school employees the ESP will supervise, how the ESP will supervise these employees, and how the governing board will oversee the ESP's supervisory responsibilities.
6. If the governing board intends to execute promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, or enter into a lease, lease-purchase agreement, or any other facility or financing relationships with the ESP, provide evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not part of or incorporated in the school management contract. Any facility or financing agreements must be consistent with the governing board's authority and practical ability to terminate the management agreement and continue operation of the school.
7. Describe and provide documentation of any loans, grants, or investments made

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

## ESP Management Plan

1. Provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
2. Describe the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
3. Describe the oversight and evaluation methods that the governing board will use to oversee the ESP. What are the schoolwide and student achievement results that the ESP is responsible for achieving? How often, and in what ways, will the governing board review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals? Will an external evaluator assess the ESP's performance? What are the conditions, standards, and procedures for governing board intervention if the ESP's performance is deemed unsatisfactory?
4. Describe the compensation structure and payment schedule, including clear identification of all fees, bonuses, and any other compensation to be paid to the ESP.
5. Describe the respective financial responsibilities of the governing board and the ESP. Who will own property purchased with public funds? Which operating and capital expenditures will each party be responsible for? What types of spending decisions can the ESP make without obtaining board approval? What reports must the ESP submit to the governing board on financial performance and on what schedule? How will the governing board provide financial oversight?
6. What is the term (duration) of the management agreement? Explain the conditions and procedures (including timeframes, notice, and decision-making procedures) for renewal and termination of the contract. How often will the management agreement be renewed? Describe the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed. On what grounds may the ESP or the school terminate the management agreement for cause and without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
7. Describe the plan for the operation of the school in the event of termination of the management agreement.
8. Provide, as **Attachment 13**, a draft of the proposed management agreement with the ESP.

## List of Attachments

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

1. Graduation standards (for high school only)
2. Enrollment policy
3. Discipline policy
4. Organization charts
5. Board documents
6. Board member information
7. Leadership team qualifications
8. School leader qualifications
9. Start-up and five-year operating budget
10. Financial plan narrative

Existing operators and applicants partnering with an ESP, as applicable:

11. Evidence of portfolio performance (for existing operators or applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)
12. Most recent annual report and audit (for existing operators or applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)
13. Proposed management agreement with ESP (for applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)

## Exhibit A: Evaluation Criteria

### Introduction

The evaluation criteria are the essential tools for proposal reviewers, used in both their individual and team assessments of each proposal. The evaluators present both ratings on a scale and narrative analysis of each section of the proposal as compared to the evaluation criteria. Throughout the evaluation process, the reviewers will update their analysis to include additional information (due diligence, capacity interview, etc.) as it is presented. Within each section, specific criteria define the expectations for a response that “Meets the Standard.”

A proposal that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how this school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant’s capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans. **To be recommended for approval, all sections of the application must be rated as “Meets the Standard.”**

In general, the following definitions guide reviewer ratings:

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



## Evaluation Criteria

### School Overview

*This section is not rated separately by the evaluators. It provides the evaluators with a reference for each of the other sections of the proposal, which will be assessed, in part, for the quality of alignment with the School Overview.*

### Section 1 — Educational Program Design

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

#### Program Overview

*This section is not rated separately by the evaluators. It provides the evaluators with a reference for each of the other subsections of the Educational Program, which will be assessed, in part, for the quality of alignment.*

#### Curriculum and Instructional Design

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

#### High School Graduation Requirements

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

#### School Culture

- Vision for school culture or ethos that will promote high expectations, a positive academic environment, and intellectual and social development for all students, including those with special needs, ELLs, and students at risk of academic failure.
- Coherent plan for establishing and maintaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents from the first day of school and throughout the school year.
- Articulate, compelling descriptions of the typical daily experiences of a student and a



teacher in grades served in Year 1. Descriptions demonstrate a well-thought-out school design that reflects the vision and will support student intellectual and social development.

## **Special Populations and At-Risk Students**

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

## **Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

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

## **Student Discipline**

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

## Performance Measures

- Annual student performance goals which include targets aligned with the state accountability system.

## Assessment & Evaluation

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

## Section 2 — Governance, Operations Plan & Capacity

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

### Organization Chart

- Clearly indicates all positions.
- Delineates appropriate board and management roles and lines of authority.

### Legal Status and Governing Documents

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

### Governing Board

- Explains how the board will accomplish its core duties of setting vision, providing accountability, creating structure for effective governance, acting in unity, and providing advocacy to achieve the vision.

- Clearly describes the independence of the board as it relates to the authorizer.
- Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
- Proposed board members who demonstrate *(as documented by résumés, bios, and Board Information sheets for all currently identified proposed members)*: (a) will, capacity, and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes, and expectations for the school(s)/network.
- Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school, including educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise.
- Other effective governance procedures, including planned frequency of meetings and standing committees.
- Appropriate proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy/procedures that will minimize real or perceived conflicts.
- Sound plan and timeline for board recruitment, expansion, orientation of new members, and ongoing training for members. Plan should include a thoughtful identification of desired experience and capacities.

## Application Team Capacity

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

budget.

## Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

- Recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures that are likely to result in a strong staff that is well-suited to the school.
- Plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that is likely to produce and retain a successful staff.
- Leadership and teacher evaluation tools that are likely to be effective.
- Effective planning for unsatisfactory leadership/teacher performance and turnover.

## Professional Development

- Sensible allocation of school vs. network responsibilities for professional development, including demonstrated understanding of, and preparation for, professional development needs that are common to all schools in the network.
- Professional development standards, opportunities, and leadership that effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, including an induction program that will prepare teachers to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the educational program.

## Facilities

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

## Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

- A start-up plan that will promote a successful school opening that specifies tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

## Section 3 — Financial Plan

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

### Financial Plan

- Reasonable assurance that the operator will have sound systems, policies, and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls, ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, and conduct independent annual financial and administrative audits.
- Evidence that the school's leadership has a strong understanding of the appropriate delineation of roles and responsibilities among the administration and governing board regarding school finance.

- Evidence that the school will ensure financial transparency, including plans for public adoption of the school's budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual report.
- Sound criteria and procedures for selecting contractors for any administrative services and the acquisition of liability insurance.
- Complete, realistic, and viable start-up and five-year operating budgets.
- Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, including identifying the amount and sources of all anticipated funds, property, or other resources (noting which are secured vs. anticipated, and including evidence of firm commitments where applicable).
- Sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

## Section 4 — Existing Charter Operator & ESP Information

*A strong proposal using an Education Service Provider (ESP), regardless of the composition of the applicant team/organizations, is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Education Program, Organization Plan, Financial Plan, and any other applicable attachments. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:*

### Existing Charter Operator Track Record

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

### ESP Track Record

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

### ESP Selection

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

ESP was selected over other ESPs, and what due diligence was conducted.

## Legal Relationship with ESP

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

## ESP Management Plan

- Detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
- Detailed explanation of the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
- Detailed description of the oversight and evaluation methods that the board will use to oversee the ESP, including schoolwide and student achievement results which the management organization is responsible for achieving, and a description of how often, and in what ways, the board will review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals.
- Detailed explanation of the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory.
- Detailed explanation of the compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP and the schedule on which the ESP will receive compensation.
- Detailed explanation of the financial responsibilities of the ESP, including the ownership of items purchased with public funds, including which operating and capital expenditures each party will be responsible for assuming, what types of spending decisions the ESP can make without obtaining board approval, and what reports ESP submit to the board on financial performance and on what schedule.
- Detailed description of the duration, renewal and termination of the management agreement, including how often the management agreement may be renewed, the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed, and the procedures for determining whether the management agreement

will be renewed.

- Detailed description of the grounds for which the ESP or the school can terminate the management agreement for cause, including provisions for notice to the other party and any conditions under which either party may terminate the management agreement without cause.
- Explanation and justification of any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
- A compelling plan for the operation of the school in the case that the management agreement is terminated.

## **ESP Management Agreement**

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

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