

Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board

Charter School Application Report Fall 2014

New Charter School Application for

Submitted by

Evaluation Team

Team Lead:

Evaluators:



National Association of Charter School Authorizers

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Introduction

Following the passage of the Mississippi Charter Schools Act of 2013 (HB 369) in April 2013, Governor Bryant created the Mississippi Charter Authorizer Board (MCSAB), a statewide charter school authorizer with exclusive charter jurisdiction in the state of Mississippi. The mission of the seven-member MCSAB is to authorize high-quality charter schools, particularly schools designed to expand opportunities for underserved students. To that end, the MCSAB executed a rigorous, high-quality process during the fall of 2014 to solicit and evaluate charter school proposals.

Focus on Quality

The Fall 2014 Request for Proposals and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that approved charter school operators possess the capacity to implement a school model that is likely to dramatically increase student outcomes. Successful applicants will demonstrate high levels of expertise and capacity in the areas of curriculum and instruction, school finance, educational and operational leadership, and non-profit governance, as well as high expectations for excellence in student achievement and professional standards. An application that merits a recommendation for approval will 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.

Evaluation Process

For the Fall 2014 RFP cycle, MCSAB partnered with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to manage the application process and to provide independent, merit-based recommendations regarding whether to approve or deny each proposal. NACSA assembled an independent evaluation team that included both national and local expertise related to charter school start-up and operation. This report from the evaluation team is a culmination of three stages of review:

Proposal Evaluation

The evaluation team conducted individual and group assessment of the merits of the proposal based on the complete written submission. In the case of experienced school operators, the MCSAB and NACSA supplemented this written evaluation with due diligence to verify claims made in the proposal related to past performance.

Capacity Interview

After reviewing the application and discussing the findings of their individual reviews, the evaluation team conducted an in-person interview to assess the team's overall capacity to implement the proposal as written in the application.

Consensus Judgment

Following the capacity interview, the evaluation team came to consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial.

The duty of the evaluation team is to recommend approval or denial of each application based on its merits against MCSAB-approved evaluation criteria. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the members of MCSAB.

Report Contents

This evaluation report includes the following:

Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

Recommendation

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

Evaluation

Analysis of the proposal based on three primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant team to execute the plan as presented:

Educational Program Design and Capacity:

curriculum and instructional design; pupil performance standards; high school graduation requirements; school calendar and schedule; school culture; supplemental programming; special populations and at-risk students; student recruitment and enrollment; student discipline; parent and community involvement; and educational program capacity.

Operations Plan and Capacity: organization charts; legal status and governing documents; governing board; advisory bodies; staff structure; staffing plans, hiring, management and evaluation; professional development; performance management; facilities; start-up and ongoing operations; and operations capacity.

Financial Plan and Capacity: start-up and five year budgets; cash flow projections; revenue and expenditure assumptions; financial policies and controls; and financial management capacity.

For applicants seeking waivers, conversion from an existing school to a public charter school, or for experienced operators or operators proposing to engage an education service provider, an analysis of: [Request for Waivers](#) (if applicable), [Conversion Charter Schools](#) (if applicable), and [Existing Operators](#) (if applicable).

Rating Characteristics

Evaluation teams assess each application against the published evaluation criteria. In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

Meets the Standard

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.

Partially Meets the Standard

The response meets the criteria in many respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

Does Not Meet the Standard

The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in a number of areas.

Falls Far Below the Standard

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.

Proposal Overview

Nonprofit Applicant Name

Proposed School Name

Mission

Proposed Location

Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Maximum # Students	Grades Served

Summary Analysis

Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others. *Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

Educational Program Design and Capacity ▼

Request for Waivers *(if applicable)* ▼

Operations Plan and Capacity ▼

Conversion Charter Schools *(if applicable)* ▼

Financial Plan and Capacity ▼

Existing Operators *(if applicable)* ▼

Plan Summary

Analysis

Plan Summary

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Evaluator Biographies

Evaluator's Name

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