Request for Proposal
and
Virtual Charter School Application
for
School Opening 2016

Maine Charter School Commission

Maine Charter School Commission

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Issue Date: June 10, 2015

Note on Virtual RFP time tables

This RFP is for applicants prepared to open and operate a virtual public charter school for the school year 2016.

Applicants should note that the following schedule will apply:

June 10, 2015	Commission Issues RFP/Application.
June 17, 2015, 10 a.m.	Information Session for interested Operators.
June 25, 2014	Due date - Letter of Intent to Apply.
September 1, 2015	**Due date – Applications.**
September 10, 2015	By this date, each application will have received a completeness review by MCSC Staff. Each application must be evaluated by a Review Team composed of not more than 3 Commission Members.
Sept 28 – Oct 2, 2015	Review Team Interviews with Applicants (Date, Time, Place TBD).
October 13, 2015	For each application, following receipt of the Review Teams' recommendation, the Commission shall determine whether the application appears to demonstrate the applicant's competence in each element of the Commission's published criteria and appears to demonstrate that the applicant is likely to open and operate a successful public charter school. If the Commission determines the application does not meet the criteria, the Commission shall deny the application without further review and notify the applicant. Otherwise, the Commission shall arrange for an in-person interview and a public hearing on the application before taking a final vote on the application.
Oct 21 – Oct 27, 2015	In-person Interviews/Public Hearings (Date, Time, Place TBD).
November 17, 2015	Commission will make a final vote on each application pending before the Commission.

Introduction

This Request for Proposals (RFP) for virtual charter school applicants is intended to solicit, encourage and guide the development of high-quality virtual public charter school applications throughout the State of Maine. Applications in response to this RFP are for consideration by the Maine Charter School Commission (the Commission) only. Applications for other authorizers will use such applications and procedures as they may develop.

This RFP/Application packet will guide you through the steps of developing a public charter school proposal. Each section requests information about a specific aspect of your plan and presents the evaluative criteria that reviewers will use to determine whether the application demonstrates the applicant's competence in each element of the Commission's published approval criteria and, as a whole, demonstrates that the applicant is ready to open and operate a successful public charter school.

The Commission requires that successful applicants will demonstrate a number of common characteristics:

- A clear, focused, results-oriented mission statement that aligns all parts of the proposal;
- A vision of how the program will improve educational and social opportunities for the charter school's student population and how that will meet a community need and affect the community. Note: the term "community" refers to the geographic area from which students are expected to be drawn.
- Demonstrated understanding of the population that the school intends to serve;
- An educational program that is likely to be effective for that population;
- A commitment to continuing professional education for faculty and staff;
- As applicable, facilities and a facilities maintenance plan that support the program;
- A commitment to inviting the participation of stake-holders in the operation of the school, including parents, students, staff and the community at large;
- Strong, experienced school and board leadership; and
- Strong financial planning and management.

In addition, virtual charter school applicants must conform to the following requirements:

- The virtual school may serve students in grades 7-12 only, must provide instruction in all eight content areas of the system of Maine Learning Results and provide a structure that allows and requires all students to achieve proficiency in the state standards in all content areas of the system of learning results
- The total number of students enrolled in all grades may not exceed 300 in year one, and may increase to no more than 750 by year five;
- The virtual school must present a plan for weekly, live, synchronous interactive contact between and among instructors and students for all courses designed for middle grades and for all core courses for students enrolled in a high school program; and

- The applicant must describe how class size and overall teaching load assures that each student receives regular and meaningful feedback and how the school will monitor this plan.

Specifically, the Commission is seeking proposals that include innovative curriculum design, scheduling that supports that design and a school calendar that reflects the mission and vision of the school. The Commission is especially interested in schools that address student populations whose needs are not well served by existing public schools.

The Commission is eager to receive well-developed applications from capable school developers who are committed to educating their students well and improving the lives of children and families in Maine's communities.

The Commission will announce one or more sessions where potential applicants may meet as a group with the Commission to discuss the application and the application process and any questions regarding the application or the application evaluation process.

In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding this application or the application process, please contact us at mcsc@maine.gov .

Application Components and Instructions

Special Notes:

1. The application instructions incorporate all of the statutory and regulatory requirements of Maine Revised Statutes Title 20-A Chapter 112: Public Charter Schools, Department of Education Rule 140 and Maine Charter School Commission Rule 002 in a manner that ensures that the proposal is responsive in addressing all of them. Applicants must review these citations along with these instructions.

2. The Letter of Intent required by the Commission's procedures is not part of this application, but anything in this application that is different from information provided in the Letter of Intent must be noted and explained in the appropriate section of this application.

The application consists of the following components:

Section I

Executive Summary: A summary of key information related to the proposed school including proposed location, enrollment projections, application contact information and a description of the mission of the proposed school, its targeted population and its unique programmatic structure.

Section II

Narrative: The narrative sections are grouped under the headings of *Educational Plan*, *Organizational and Operational Plan*, *Governance*, *Business and Financial Services* and *Education Service Providers*.

Section III

Within each section there are specific response categories, and each response category includes the following:

- Applicant instructions that inform you of what you are expected to present;
- Evaluation Criteria by which reviewers will evaluate your response; and
- Required tabs listing attachments that you are required to provide as part of the application. (These required tabs do not prohibit you from providing any other information that you consider relevant and significant for presenting your plan.)

Tabs

1. Map of Catchment Area
2. Special Education Procedural Safeguards (IHBA)
3. Referral/Pre-Referral of Students with Disabilities Policy
4. Referral/Pre-Referral Procedures
5. Child Find Policy (IHBAC)
6. Grievance Procedure for Persons with Disabilities Policy
7. Notification of Rights Under FERPA
8. Performance Measures (Indicators) Template
9. School Discipline Policy
10. School Seclusion and Restraint Policy (JKAA)
11. Emergency Response Guide
12. Anti-bullying Policy
13. Anti-harassment Policy
14. Sample Daily Schedule for one grade in each proposed division
15. Annual Calendar for first year of operation
16. Projected Enrollment Table
17. First-year Staffing Chart
18. Staff Handbook or Employee Manual
19. Pre-opening Plan Template
20. Organizational Chart
21. Position Descriptions and Resumes for Key Staff
22. Articles of Incorporation
23. Corporate By-laws
24. IRS Acknowledgement of Exemption or copy of filed Application for Exemption
    a. (Form 1023)
25. Conflict of Interest Policy
26. Governing Board Resumes
27. Board Profile
28. List of Officers and Committee Chairs
29. Three-year Budget with grade by grade enrollment projections and staffing projections for faculty and staff positions, budget and cash flow for the pre-opening period and monthly cash flow for the first year of operation
30. Room Schedule
31. Facility Lease or Contract
32. Schedule of Furnishings and Fixtures
33. Transportation Plan
34. Certificates of Insurance
35. School Closure Template
36. Education Service Provider (ESP) background information (if applicable)
37. List of Schools managed by the ESP and contact information (if applicable)
38. ESP executed or draft Contract (if applicable)

Format Requirements

The Application should adhere to the following format:

- Hard copy on white 8.5" x 11" paper
- One-inch margin on all sides
- Minimum 11-point font
- Single-spaced
- Spiral binding or 3 ring binders (no staples or paper clips)
- Narrative shall be in MS Word or compatible software and budgets and cash flows shall be in Excel or compatible software
- Include Tabbed documents in section where required.

Application Deadline and Submission

The application package should include the following:

- 10 bound sets (can be double-sided)
- One clearly labeled, one-sided, unbound original copy
- One electronic version of the application including all Tab Documents on a clearly labeled CD or Thumb Drive

The full application must be received no later than **5 p.m., Tuesday, September 1, 2015**, at:

Maine Charter School Commission
111 Sewall Street, 5th Floor
182 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0182
207-624-6729

Section I

Maine Charter School Commission
Executive Summary

Applicant Instructions (*All relevant information must be provided as indicated*)

Name of proposed Virtual Public Charter School _____

Name of entity that will hold the charter _____

Primary Contact _____

Title/Relationship to entity _____

Mailing Address _____

_____

Telephone (Primary) _____Telephone (Secondary) _____

Email Address _____

Education Service Provider (if applicable) _____

Partner Organization (if applicable) _____

Physical Address of facilities, if any, to be used _____

_____

Intended opening date _____

Proposed grades and initial enrollment _____

_____

School Description (150 word maximum)

Attach a brief description of your school that includes the mission, grades served and other information that you would like to include to describe the unique program and student body you intend to serve.

Application Certification

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate. I recognize that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation of a charter after its award. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized by the Board to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the organization.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ Title (Position) _____

Section II

A. Education Plan

The Education Plan should define what students will achieve; how they will achieve it and how the school will evaluate performance. It should provide a clear picture of what a student who attends the school will experience with respect to educational climate, structure, assessment and outcomes

A.1 Mission, Vision, identification of targeted student population and the community the school hopes to serve

Applicant Instructions

State the school's mission and briefly present your vision for how the school will operate. A mission statement defines the core purpose and key values of the school and informs the public about the students the school intends to serve. The vision statement is a statement of how the public charter school will look once it is operating. The vision and mission statements should be succinct and easy to understand. The mission statement should be reflected throughout all sections of the application.

Describe the school's educational foundation and the culture or ethos. Include an overview of the instructional methods and any research or experience that explains why you have chosen to use this approach with your anticipated student population.

Describe the student population to be served within the catchment area, both geographically and demographically. Discuss the community need that the school will meet by describing the characteristics, population and unmet educational needs of the community where the proposed public charter school will be located. Include in detail, any objective market research, surveys, or other measures of local demand for the proposed educational program. .

Explain how the proposed mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services align with the educational needs of that population.

Required Tab

1. Map showing outline of catchment area

Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrates that the school will meet a community or regional need;
- Provides the reason for the selection of the community and the applicant's ability to serve this particular community;

- Provides a specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options, including whether the educational program or innovative methods to be used by the proposed school differ from the district or districts from which the charter school is expected to enroll students;

- Presents a clear, focused, compelling brief mission statement that defines the purpose of the school;

- Identifies the school's philosophical approach to educating students; ensures that program elements are meaningful, manageable and measurable and focuses on improving student outcomes;

- Presents a coherent vision of what the school will look like in 5-10 years if it is achieving its mission;

- Demonstrates a clear understanding of the students the school intends to and is likely to serve; and

- Presents a persuasive explanation of how the proposed mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services are likely to meet the needs of the target population.

A.2 Academic Program

Applicant Instructions

Provide a description of the curriculum to be used by the school that reflects the needs of the school's target population, including measurable objectives and subject area content and skills for each grade level, and a curriculum outline.

Demonstrate how the school provides instruction of all students in all eight content areas of the system of Maine Learning Results and provides a structure that allows and requires all students to achieve proficiency in the state standards in all content areas of the system of learning results.

Discuss the school's instructional design, including the type of learning environment, such as classroom-based or independent study, project and performance-based, experiential, class size and structure, curriculum overview, teaching methods and research basis that will be relevant or necessary to successful implementation of the curriculum.

Describe the methods and systems that teachers and learning coaches will use to provide differentiated instruction to all students. (For core subjects, include sample lessons from two different grade levels that illustrate strategies for implementation of the curriculum consistent with the mission and educational philosophy.) A learning coach is the parent (or other responsible adult) working in conjunction with the teacher, who facilitates the student's progress through daily lessons and ensures the student is following through on his or her academic program.

Describe the methods and systems that teachers will use to provide differentiated instruction to all students.

For core subjects, include sample lessons from two different grade levels that illustrate strategies for implementation of the curriculum consistent with the mission and educational philosophy.

Explain how teachers will engage with each student in weekly live (synchronous), interactive contact and provide evidence of such contact.

Describe the school's plan to incorporate in-person social interaction among students and school staff.

Provide 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.

Co-curricular and extracurricular programs add value and skills to students' lives and enrich the learning experience. Explain any opportunities for enrichment activities that are included in the application. MRS 20A § 2415 2.

Discuss how curriculum and instructional needs are reflected in plans for professional development for teachers and learning coaches.

Discuss provision of necessary technology to support the program, including computer hardware and software, internet connection, etc. and provisions to assure access for special populations.

Present the school's plan regarding maintenance and/or replacement of damaged or malfunctioning equipment or software.

Evaluation Criteria

- Presents a viable plan for curriculum development of the core academic areas consistent with the school's mission, values and education program design;
- Describes the framework for development of the curricula for core subjects;
- Identifies a sound research, experience or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide curriculum development;
- Provides evidence of a curriculum outline for core subjects;
- Demonstrates that the school provides instruction of all students in all eight content areas of the system of Maine Learning Results and provides a structure that allows and requires all students to achieve proficiency in the state standards in all content areas of the system of learning results;
- Demonstrates understanding of relevant instructional strategies;
- Provides an explanation as to how teachers will differentiate the instruction and provide weekly, interactive contact with every student and a plan to incorporate in-person social interaction among students and school staff;

- Discusses funding and delivery method for co-curricular and extracurricular program;
- Presents plans for professional development for teachers and learning coaches; and
- Provides a plan for the provision of necessary technology and for the maintenance or replacement of the equipment or software.

High School Graduation Requirements (High Schools Only)

High schools will be expected to meet Maine's graduation standards, MRS Title 20-A § 4722 High School Diploma Standards, § 4723 Health and Physical Education, § 4724 Computer Instruction, § 4722-A Proficiency-based diploma standards.

Applicant Instructions

High Schools will be expected to meet the state graduation standards.

Describe how the school will meet these requirements. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, how the student would meet standards and/or the requirements for a proficiency-based diploma and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed state standards, explain the additional requirements.

Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (technical school, military service or entering the workforce).

Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

- Describes a sound plan for meeting state graduation requirements: including credit, GPA calculation, electives and/or standards and proficiency-based diplomas and compelling explanation of any additional requirements beyond the state's requisites;
- Presents a clear, persuasive explanation of how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities (technical school, military service, or entering the workforce); and
- Discusses the effective systems and structures for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements.

A.3 Special Student Populations

Applicant Instructions

As public schools, charter schools may not discriminate on the basis of disability. Admissions and enrollment practices must be consistent with federal and state law requirements. Charter schools who engage in "counseling out" are acting improperly and violating applicable law. Maine Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER) related notations can be found at: http://www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/laws/chapter101.pdf Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) notations can be found at: http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=%2Findex.tpl. Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 Plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Describe the school's plans for identifying and successfully serving students with the wide range of learning needs and styles typically found in non-charter public schools of the sending area.

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.

Explain more specifically how you will 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:

- Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);
- Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for students with special education needs;
- 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 Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (high school only);
- Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population;
- Plan to conduct "Child Find";
- Types of pre-referral activities to be used;
- General Education Intervention plan (MUSER Section III);

- Policies and practices to identify students who may be eligible for special education and related services;
- Procedures used in evaluation of all students with disabilities (MUSER Section V);
- Procedures used in determining eligibility for special education (MUSER Section VII);
- Plan for addressing needs of students who enter the charter school with an existing Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from another School Administrative Unit (SAU) and in compliance with Maine state statutes and rules; (MUSER Section IX.3.B.(5);
- Policies and practices regarding the development of IEPs for all identified students (MUSER Sections IX, X, XI);
- Plan for appropriate accommodations and/or alternate assessments for students with disabilities; (MUSER Section IX.3.A.);
- Assurance that every student will be served in the least restrictive environment; (34 CFR Reg.300.114);
- Detailed continuum of placements to eligible students;
- Plan for the engagement of certified professionals to provide special education and related services through on-staff or contracted service; and
- Plan to provide procedural safeguards.
- Explain how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students, including the following:
- Methods for identifying ELL students (and avoiding misidentification);
- 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;
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services;
- Means for providing qualified staffing for ELL students.

Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide for these students.

Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of Gifted and Talented students, including the following: (see http://www.maine.gov/doe/gifted/ and http://www.maine.gov/doe/gifted/laws/index.html)

- Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities;
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of Gifted and Talented students; and
- What means will be used for providing qualified staffing for Gifted and Talented students.

Articulate how the curriculum/educational program of the school will meet the unique needs of all enrolled students.

Required Tabs

2. Special Education Procedural Safeguards
4. Referral/Pre-Referral of Students with Disabilities Policy
5. Referral/Pre-Referral Procedures
6. Child Find Policy
7. Grievance Procedure for Persons with Disabilities Policy
8. Notification of Rights under FERPA

Evaluation Criteria

- Describes a comprehensive plan and a commitment to serve the full range of needs of special education students;
- Demonstrates an understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding the identification and education of students with disabilities and 504 plans by addressing each of the listed categories;
- Provides a sound explanation of evidence from which the projection of anticipated special populations was derived;
- Indicates a commitment to serving the full range of needs of students with disabilities; including appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities;
- Demonstrates understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements identification and education of the English Language Learner (ELL) and the Gifted and Talented populations;
- Demonstrates an understanding of and a commitment to meet the needs of all enrolled students: those with disabilities, students identified as Gifted and Talented and English Language Learners (ELLs); and

- Describes a 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.

A.4 Assessment

Applicant Instructions

Describe the school's approach to assessment such as, but not limited to, data driven, subjective, formative and or portfolio based. Explain how the school will evaluate progress of individual students and cohorts over time and the school as a whole toward meeting the statewide requirements.

Describe the school's plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report student progress on the measures and metrics of the performance framework developed by the authorizer in accordance with Public Charter School Law, Title 20-A, §2409 and included in Commission Rule Chapter 2 and the Performance Indicators; also, complete the Performance Indicators Template.

Show how the school will monitor and verify student progress and performance in each course through regular assessments and submission of coursework.

Demonstrate how the school will effectively monitor and collect data on enrollment, course loads, credit accrual, proficiency standards and course completion.

Present the school's plan for effective systems and procedures for validating the authenticity of student work and accurate attendance and enrollment reporting.

Describe the school's policies and criteria for promoting students to the next level and for graduation from the school.

Describe how the school will use assessment information to modify the educational program and improve instruction, student learning and staff development.

Required Tab

8. Performance Measures (Indicators) Template

Evaluation Criteria

- Aligns with the school's mission and overall educational priorities;
- Demonstrates understanding of the school's obligation to participate in the statewide system of assessment and accountability;
- Presents a clear, credible and sound plan for measuring and reporting the educational performance and progress of individual students, cohorts and the charter school as a whole including valid and reliable measures of student outcomes;

- Presents a statement on promotion and graduation criteria;
- Explains how the school will use assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at improving academic outcomes; and
- Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to compliance with assessment requirements applicable to all Maine public schools consistent with state law and relevant policies.

A.5 School Climate and Discipline

Applicant Instructions

Describe the strategies the school will employ to develop and sustain a safe and supportive school climate that supports fulfillment of the educational goals. Explain the school's student behavior philosophy, discipline policy and code of conduct for both the general student population and for students with special needs. The full discipline policy should be included as an attachment if already developed.

Discuss how you plan to address bullying and harassment as a specific issue. How will that fit into your discipline policy or code of conduct, if you have one, and how will staff be trained to be sensitive to the conditions that create or support bullying.

Discuss how staff and students will be engaged in creating and sustaining a learning community atmosphere emotionally, physically and socially safe. Describe how this climate will support academic growth, development and risk taking that expands learning.

Describe the social and emotional services that you expect will be needed by your students.

Describe how school staff and administration will collaborate in the identification of these needs and the programs, resources and services that will be provided to meet the social and emotional needs of the student population.

Explain how the school will encourage family involvement and communication to support student learning and how it will gauge satisfaction with school climate.

Describe how the school will respond to emergencies such as fire, water damage, bomb threat and other conditions that will require removing students from the property to a safe place and/or disrupt student access to learning.

Describe the school's plans for compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations.

Required Tabs

9. School Discipline Policy.
10. School Seclusion and Restraint Policy.

11. Emergency Response Guide.
12. Anti-bullying Policy.
13. Anti-harassment Policy.

Evaluation Criteria

- Describes an approach to student discipline that is reasonably likely to promote a safe and supportive learning environment for the entire student population;
- Presents legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension, dismissal and expulsion or a reasonable plan for their development;
- Describes the creation of an emotionally, physically and socially safe atmosphere supportive of student growth;
- Outlines staff and programs that support social and emotional needs of students;
- Outlines a clear strategy for engaging parents and guardians in the life and culture of the school;
- Includes evidence that the school will ensure a safe and supportive environment conducive to learning;
- Describes well thought-out emergency procedures; and
- Cites student code of conduct, anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies.

B. Organizational and Operational Plan

The Organizational and Operational Plan should provide an understanding of how the school will be operated, beginning with the governance and management. It should present a clear picture of the schools' operating priorities, delegation of responsibilities and relationships with key stakeholders.

B.1 School Calendar and Daily Schedule

Applicant Instructions

Present the school calendar showing the number of days the school will be in session and sample daily class schedules showing daily hours of operation and allocation of time for core instruction, supplemental instruction, extra-curricular and after-school activities, as applicable.

Describe how instructional delivery is measured and how time for core instruction, supplemental instruction, extra-curricular and after-school activities, as applicable, are allocated.

Explain how weekly live, interactive contact will occur.

Discuss the conditions that will cause a school closing and the procedures for notifying families about any such closings.

Required Tabs

14. Sample Daily Schedule for each grade span the school intends to operate (elementary, middle and/or high school)

15. Annual Calendar for the first year of operation

Evaluation Criteria

- Explains how the school will ensure that students receive an equivalent number of hours of instruction if it does not plan to meet the state law and rules regarding the minimum number of school days;

- Aligns with the school's educational mission and vision; and

- Provides criteria for school closing days.

B.2 Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Applicant Instructions

In the table provided, enter the grades to be served each year for the full term of the charter; minimum, planned and maximum enrollment per grade per year for the term of the charter.

Projected Enrollment Table Sample						
Grades	Ages	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
Other						

Describe the plan and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically describe the plan for outreach to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, students of all income levels and other youth at risk of academic failure.
What strategies will you use to reach families that are traditionally less informed about educational options?

Include an explanation and evidence to support the enrollment projections. Relevant evidence

may include, among other things, the following:

- Community demographic information including homeschooled students (numbers of potential students);
- Documentation of community or family demand for the proposed school such as letters of interest to enroll;
- Enrollment data from schools currently operating in community; and
- If applicable, the proposed or actual location and catchment area of the school.

Describe the policies and procedures that will be used to deal with enrollment, attendance, withdrawal, truancy and mid-year transfers.

Required Tab

16. Projected Enrollment Table

Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrates that the school will meet a community need;

Includes an outreach and recruitment plan that demonstrates understanding of the community to be served and that is likely to be effective, including for families traditionally less informed about educational options;

- Provide a sound and thoughtful student and recruitment and marketing plan, timeline and enrollment policy that will assure equal access to all interested students and families, including those in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, students of all income levels and other youth at risk of academic failure;
- Presents enrollment projections that are supported by evidence of actual or potential demand;
- Includes enrollment and admissions policies and plans that comply with State requirements (Department of Education 05-071 Chapter 140);
- Discusses the demographic information for the catchment area that supports the enrollment projections; and
- Presents evidence to indicate that the enrollment projections by grade and school-wide for each year of the charter period are realistic.

B.3 Staffing and Human Resources

Applicant Instructions

Provide a staffing chart for the school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the charter. Discuss the plan for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff. The school's chief executive officer must be employed by the governing board of the proposed charter school. The chief financial officer must be an employee of the school and must manage all public revenues received by the school.

Discuss how the plan supports sound operation and successful implementation of the school's educational program.

Describe the instructional skills, experience and professional development that teachers will need to have in order to be successful. How are those needs reflected in the plan for teacher recruitment.

Explain what skills and experiences will be expected for learning coaches and how they will be supported. Explain how you ensure that every child has a learning coach.

Describe the school's professional development expectations and opportunities, including the following:

- Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.
- Discuss the core components of professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.
- Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development 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.
- Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development 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 how such time will typically be used.

Include a draft of a Staff Handbook or Employment Manual. The Manual should address at least: faculty and staff assessment, salary administration and a description of benefits, including any health care provided, vacations, holidays, sick days and other conditions of employment.

In responding to this section, include the following topics:

- Strategies the school has for recruiting and retaining effective teachers.
- The school definition of effective.

- The staffing-related budget assumptions that align with the educational program needs.
- The staffing plan that reflects the anticipated enrollment and growth of the school.
- The school's means to determine appropriate experience, training and skills of non-certified instructional personnel.
- Describe the school's leadership and teacher employment policies, including performance evaluation plans and professional development expectations and opportunities.

Required Tabs

20. First-year Staffing Chart
21. Staff Handbook or Employee Manual

Evaluation Criteria

- Presents strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers that are realistic and reasonably likely to be effective;
- Demonstrates a sound understanding of staffing needs that are aligned with the mission and vision, the budget and with the school's anticipated enrollment;
- Demonstrates a sound understanding of staffing needs with respect to successful implementation of the educational program;
- Demonstrates through staff employment policies that the conditions of employment are likely to attract and retain high quality staff;
- Offers a plan for professional development;
- Documents a performance evaluation plan that ensures growth and development;
- Describes professional development standards, opportunities, leadership and calendar/scheduling 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; and
- Provides evidence of a system for selecting and supporting learning coaches to meet student needs.

B.4 Pre-Opening Plan

Applicant Instructions

Provide a Pre-opening Plan that documents key tasks to be completed between approval of the application and opening of the school. Include a schedule for initiation, development and completion of those tasks. Identify primary responsibility by individual or position and document anticipated resource needs.

Required Tab

19. Pre-opening Plan Template

Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrates understanding of key pre-opening responsibilities consistent with the school's mission and education, organizational, business and fiscal startup plan; and
- Provides a detailed school start-up plan, identifying tasks, timelines and responsible individuals.

B.5 Management and Operation

Applicant Instructions

Describe the organizational structure of the school and its day-to-day operation. Explain the management roles and responsibilities of key administrators with respect to instructional leadership, curriculum development and implementation, personnel decisions, budgeting, financial management, facilities management, legal compliance and any special staffing needs. Provide background information on school leadership and management team members, if identified.

Explain partnerships and contractual relationships central to the school's operation or mission.

Your response should describe the primary responsibilities for each key management position and should identify critical skills or experience that will be priorities for fulfillment of those responsibilities. Give particular attention to the roles, responsibilities and, if already identified, actual qualifications or desired qualifications of the school leader.

Discuss any plans for recruiting and selection of the school leader - if not already identified.

Required Tabs

20 .Organizational Chart that shows the staffing structure and reporting responsibilities for the board, administration and staff

21. Key position descriptions including critical skills or experience of every employee that will be hired based on organizational chart (description can be general for core teachers). Qualifications for hiring should provide assurance that fingerprinting and background checks will be conducted in accordance with the law. Resumes should be included for key staff.

Evaluation Criteria

- Clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school;
- Demonstrates understanding of management needs and priorities;
- Includes a staffing plan that is viable and adequate for effective implementation of the proposed educational program; and
- Describes how the school leader was, or will be, recruited and selected.

B.6 Parent and Community Involvement

Applicant Instructions

Describe the role to date of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.

Describe what you have done to assess and build parent and community demand for your school and how you will engage parents and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening.

Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to or require of parents.

Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms and scope of services of any such partnerships including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student-learning opportunities. Include existing evidence of support from intended community partners such as letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding and/or contracts.

Discuss opportunities and expectations for parent involvement such as, but not limited to, volunteering, monitoring their child's education and holding the school accountable.

Discuss your plans for community involvement in the governance and operation of the school. Describe the nature of potential partnerships including examples of how community partners will play an integral part in the life of the school and identify specific organizations with which the

school is already working, or likely to partner.

Describe your plans for developing community partnerships and any specific steps you have already taken. Include in your response relevant documentation such as letters of support or commitments to provide or share resources.

Provide evidence that the proposed charter school has held public meetings in the catchment area for students to share the mission, vision and academic program of the school and has gathered community and local stakeholder feedback through the meetings, email, website or other means.

Provide evidence of community support for the proposed public charter school, including information on discussions, if any, with school administrative units where the public charter school will be located concerning recruitment and operations of the public charter school and possible collaboration with school administrative units.

Evaluation Criteria

- Presents a vision and strategy for community involvement that is reasonably likely to further the school's mission and program;
- Presents a sound pre- and post- opening parent engagement plan, including family-school partnerships that is welcoming and accessible to all parents;
- Provides effective strategies for informing parents and the community about the school's development;
- Describes community resources and partnerships that will benefit students and parents and that include a) description of the nature, purposes, terms and scope of services of any such partnerships; and b) evidence of commitment from identified community partners;
- Presents a plan for parent/guardian/family involvement and engagement in the Charter School;
- Provides documentation of community partners;
- Presents a statement of any current and projected relationships with School Administration Units;
- Provides documentation of public meetings held in the catchment area, including location held, agenda, reasonable public notice, involvement of local stakeholders, synopsis of comments received and how they were considered and addressed and persons attending.

C. Governance

The Governing Board of the school is the entity responsible to ensure that school leadership

carries out the requirements of the charter contract. The Board is responsible for ensuring that the viability of the school is secured into the future by hiring an outstanding school leader and insisting that key positions are filled with competent staff and providing adequate resources to support the educational program.

C.1 Governing Body

Applicant Instructions

Regardless of the corporate structure of a proposed virtual school and whether or not it has a national or international profile, any virtual school affiliate serving Maine students must clearly demonstrate that the Board of the Maine charter school has complete authority to make all of the decisions relating to the operation of the school and is the sole entity able to resolve any issues or concerns that the Maine Charter School Commission has with the school.

Describe the entity that will hold the charter and be responsible for governing the school. To be eligible for a charter from the Commission, the entity must be a Maine non-profit corporation and must have filed for status as a charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or have received a notice of exemption. Provide documentation of the entity's legal status - including Articles of Incorporation, by-laws and documentation of incorporation as a Maine non-profit corporation. The Governing Board must be independent having legal, fiduciary and oversight authority for the charter school with autonomy over key decisions, as referenced in MRS 20-A § 2401, sections 6, 9A:

> ***6. Governing board.*** *"Governing board" means the independent board of a public charter school that is party to the charter contract with the authorizer and whose members have been elected or selected pursuant to the school's application.*
>
> ***9. Public charter school.*** *"Public charter school" means a public school formed pursuant to this chapter that:*
> *A. Has autonomy over key decisions, including, but not limited to, decisions concerning finance, personnel, scheduling, curriculum and instruction.*

Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the Board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.

Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the Governing Board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers and duties of the Governing Board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise and constituencies that will be represented on the Governing Board. Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; b) the Board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader; and c) there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.

To the extent that the organization has already existed and has functions independent of the operation of the proposed school, provide a brief description of the organization, its history, its current operation and the relationship between its existing operations and the proposed school.

The Governing Board will be responsible for documentation in response to the external review by the Maine Charter School Commission. As part of a complete review system, discuss the internal review process and data collection that will be used to evaluate the academic and organizational functioning of the charter school.

Describe the Board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Provide the Board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.

Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps that the Board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.

Required Tabs

22. Articles of Incorporation.

23. Corporate By-laws.

24. Documentation that the applicant is a Maine nonprofit corporation, has filed an application for exemption (Form 1023) with the Internal Revenue Service or has a notice of exemption.

25. Conflict of Interest Policy (covering Board Members and key administrators).

Evaluation Criteria

- Include proper documentation that the entity proposing to hold the charter is a Maine nonprofit corporation and has filed for status as a charitable organization under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue code or has received a notice of exemption;

- Provide evidence that the Governing Board is an independent functioning entity as stipulated in applicant instructions;

- Cite Board procedures in the by-laws that are consistent with the need for sustainability;

- In the case of pre-existing organizations, offer evidence that the operation of the proposed school is consistent with the organization's overall mission and operation;

- Provide documentation of the internal process to be used for review and the data to be used in making evaluative determinations;

- Present clear, appropriate plans for the Board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s);

- Describe clear roles, duties and composition of any advisory bodies/councils and effective relationship to the school Governing Board and leadership; and

- Include other effective governance procedures, including planned frequency of meetings and standing committees.

C.2 Governing Board Composition

Applicant Instructions

List the members of the proposed Governing Board and their intended roles, including their names, current employment and relevant experience or qualifications for serving on the board, including, but not limited to, their relationship to the community in which the school will be located.

For each proposed Governing Board Member, the application must include a resume.

Describe the criteria for selecting Board Members and include any specific plans for recruitment of additional Governing Board Members, including, but not limited to, plans that would involve parental, professional educator or community involvement in the governance of the school.

Discuss how the Board Members' skills and experience support their responsibilities for development and oversight of the school and planning for its future.

Employees of the Charter School cannot be voting members of the Governing Board and the schools chief leader must be a non-voting member ex officio.

Describe any advisory bodies or councils to be formed, including the roles and duties of that body. Describe the planned composition of the advisory body; the strategy for achieving that composition; the role of parents, students and teachers (if applicable); and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.

Required Tabs

26. Governing Board Resumes

27. Board Profile (a matrix of qualifications and experience to be represented on the board)

28. List of officers and committee chairs and an organization chart depicting each role and relationship

Evaluation Criteria

- The Board has the experience and the capacity to oversee the implementation and operation of the education program presented in the application;

- Board Members represent the diverse skills and backgrounds (profile) necessary to oversee the operation of a school and to ensure that the organization has a clear plan for the future viability of the organization;

- The Board has the capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public and private funds;

- The Board has the capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school's compliance with its legal obligations;

- The Board has the background and ability to represent the interests of the school community;
- The Board is aware of their duties and responsibilities as public servants in accordance with the language of section 501(c) 3;
- The Board Members demonstrate *(*as documented by resumes, bios, and board information sheets for all currently-identified proposed members): (a) will, capacity and commitment to govern the school effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes and expectations for the school; and
- Evidence that the Governing Board Members demonstrate that they 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.

D. Business and Financial Services

This section deals with managing the business that supports the program of the school. Applicants will be expected to pay attention to the need to manage the business carefully and to report on the success of school leaders in managing that business according to adopted budgets. Without a sound business plan and qualified people to manage against the plan, the school cannot succeed. Reviewers of the Application will want to be convinced that there is a sound plan and a sound financial infrastructure to support the plan.

D.1 Budget

Applicant Instructions

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.

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finances and distinguish between each.

Describe the school's plans and procedures for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school.

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.

Describe any services to be contracted, such as business services, payroll and auditing services, including the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.

Submit a completed Charter School Budget Template. In developing your budget, please use the per-pupil revenue projections that can be obtained from the Maine Department of Education. **Note**: The Charter School receives 96% of the per-pupil revenue projections; 1% remains with the resident district; 3% to the Commission by the resident district.

Detail the school's estimated revenues and expenditures for the first three full years of the proposed term of the charter. Also, provide a monthly cash flow analysis of for the first fiscal year of operation (July 1 – June 30) and for the pre-opening startup period.

Discuss how the charter school will be able to demonstrate a cash reserve by the end of year 3, sufficient to cover expenses for 2 months or more.

Present in a budget narrative how the budget aligns with and supports implementation of the educational program. Also include a detailed description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing level costs and consideration of adequate resources to provide unanticipated special education costs. The narrative should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations and fundraising).Include the following:

- Per-Pupil Revenue;
- Anticipated Funding Sources. Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends;
- The school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated;
- Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening;
- Anticipated fundraising activities and expected contributions;
- If the school anticipates incurring debt for any reason, such as for acquisition of its facility, the budget must address the schedule for debt repayment and the budget discussion should elaborate on the repayment assumptions and plan.

Required Tabs

29. Budget for first 3 years, including a staffing schedule, enrollment by grade, benefits and other budget assumptions, opening year monthly cash flow analysis and pre-opening period budget and cash flow

Evaluation Criteria

- Budget priorities that are consistent with and support the mission and vision of the school, including the school's educational program, staffing, staff development and facility support;
- Draft financial procedures policy or other 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 three-year operating budgets;

- Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, 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)and debt assumptions;

- Sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated and/or unanticipated special education costs;

- A plan to develop a cash reserve by the end of year three.

D.2 Financial Management

Applicant Instructions

Describe the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances and identify the staff position(s) that will be responsible for financial oversight and management. Describe how the school's finances will be managed and who will be responsible for the protection of student and financial records. Describe the relationship of the chief financial officer to the Governing Board (Board finance committee). Your response should address, among other things, the school's plans in the following areas:

- Development and maintenance of a chart of accounts that complies with accounting standards and supports appropriate financial reporting;

- Provisions for monthly and annual financial reports and an annual audit;

- Description planned or actual financial controls;

- Description of the school's financial policies;

- Description of accounting software that connects seamlessly to DOE system, Maine Education Data Management System (MEDMS)

- Description of required student records and their management;

- Development and dissemination of monthly and annual financial reports; and
- Securing comprehensive insurance policies from a company that specializes in educational institutions.

Evaluation Criteria

- A demonstrated comprehensive understanding of the school's financial management obligations;
- Evidence that the school is prepared to adhere to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Evidence or a system of financial controls to ensure that receipts and payments are properly accounted for in a timely manner and that cash is handled properly;
- Evidence that the software or accounting system to be used is appropriate and its users are fully trained;
- Evidence that the school has adequate policies and processes for tracking enrollment eligibility and attendance, eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch, special student populations; and
- Demonstrated preparation to meet its insurance, annual audit, monthly and annual financial reports and other key financial management obligations.

D.3 Facilities [complete as applicable]

Applicant Instructions

Present a clear plan to secure appropriate facilities for administering state assessments and a plan for conducting parent-teacher conferences.

Discuss the school's facility needs based on the educational program and anticipated enrollment. If the applicant has identified a facility, indicate the location (street address, city, and zip code) and provide either floor plans or a description including, at a minimum, the number and size of the general and special (laboratories, art studios, etc.) classrooms, common areas, administrative areas, recreational space, any community facilities and any residential facilities. Explain how the facility will meet the needs of students and support the school's mission and provide an assurance that it will be accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.

If a facility has not been selected, specify potential locations that are under consideration and discuss the process and time line for selecting, acquiring, renovating (if appropriate) and taking occupancy of a suitable facility.

Discuss plans to maintain and clean the facilities and provide methodology to determine their costs.

Charter school facilities must comply with applicable state and local health and safety requirements. In addition, charter school applicants must be prepared to follow applicable city planning review procedures.

To the extent that the school has discussed or established specific lease or purchase terms, include the proposed terms and any draft of final contracts. If the school intends to lease facilities from a school district or public agency, discuss the status of those plans and provide evidence of any district or public agency commitments.

To the extent that the facility will require renovation or 'build out,' describe those plans including anticipated timing and detailed cost schedules.

If the school anticipates incurring debt as part of its facilities acquisition plan, the budget must include a repayment plan, as indicated in the Budget Section, above.

Required Tabs

30. Room schedule (number, size, function, anticipated class size)

31. Any leases or contracts

32. A schedule of furnishings and fixtures

Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstration of a sound understanding of facility's needs;
- Demonstrates knowledge of facilities costs including, as applicable, cost of purchasing, leasing, building or renovating an educational facility that conforms to applicable health, safety and occupancy requirements;
- Evidence to support facilities-related budget assumptions;
- Evidence that the school will be properly maintained and cleaned;
- A 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;
- Evidence that the proposed facility will be adequate or present a plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's educational program, anticipated location and target population; and
- A clear and compelling demonstration that the school's plan for acquisition and maintenance of a facility is financially viable.

D.4 Transportation [complete as applicable]

Applicant Instructions

Discuss the plan to provide transportation within the school's catchment area and what transportation services, if any, will be provided to students outside the catchment area. Describe the revenue and expenditure assumptions for the transportation plan.

Note: A virtual charter school is required to provide, or provide for, transportation services that meet at least the following student needs: transportation to and from a testing site for required state assessments, transportation required to participate in in-person meetings and activities required by the school, and transportation required by state or federal law or regulation relating to services to students with disabilities, including but not limited to transportation to evaluation appointments and transportation to receive related services under an IEP.

If the school intends to contract with the local district or any other third party for transportation services, discuss the status of those plans and provide evidence of the third party's readiness and terms for providing those services.

Describe the plans for providing transportation for students with disabilities in the manner required to comply with IDEA.

Required Tab

33. Transportation Plan

Evaluation Criteria

- Present a thorough, realistic and cost-effective transportation plan by proposed school, including transportation as specifically required of virtual charter schools and transportation for students with disabilities in the manner to comply with IDEA;

- Provide specific evidence of third party readiness (if utilized) and terms for providing transportation services consistent with the school's budget assumptions and state and federal laws relating to student transportation;

- Describe the catchment area within which transportation will be provided and what assistance, if any, will be provided to meet the needs of students outside the catchment area; and

- Describe viable transportation options for students, if any, for whom transportation is not to be provided.

D.5 Insurance

Applicant Instructions

Provide evidence of ability and preparation to obtain liability insurance coverage (minimum A-BEST rating) in the following areas:

- Educators Legal Liability;
- Commercial General Comprehensive Liability that also expressly covers field trips and athletic participation;
- Employment Practices Liability;
- Sexual Abuse Liability (separate policy or a separate part of general comprehensive insurance with independent limits);
- Automobile Liability;
- Excess Liability or Umbrella (i.e., bundled commercial general liability, directors' and officers' liability, legal liability, employment practices liability, automobile liability, and sexual abuse liability);
- Workers Compensation Liability; and
- Surety bond for the school's chief financial officer in an amount to be determined based on the cash flow of the school.

Provide evidence of ability and preparation to obtain Insurance coverage for the following areas:

- Property insurance to address business interruption and casualty needs including fire and other hazards, with replacement costs coverage for all assets listed in the Charter School's property inventory and consumables;
- Property insurance for buildings used by the Charter School to fulfill the purposes of this charter and any contents acquired by the School with public funds. The insurance obtained by the School shall provide the Commission with the ability to file a claim for any loss of property acquired with public funds.

Required Tabs

34. Certificates of Insurance

Evaluation Criteria

- Evidence of requisite insurance coverage or ability to obtain requisite insurance coverage;

- Evidence of requisite surety bond for school CFO or ability to obtain requisite surety bond; and

- Include evidence to support the budget expense assumptions related to insuring the school such as copies of broker or agency estimates.

D.6 Food Service [complete as applicable]

Applicant Instructions

Discuss the food service plan for the school. Whether or not the school will provide an in-house food service program, state how students will access nutritious meals during the school day.

State whether the school intends to participate in the national school lunch program or provide any lunch or other meals for students. If so, describe the food service plan and explain budget revenue and expenditure assumptions.

If the school intends to contract with a third party for food service, discuss the status of those plans and provide evidence of the third party's readiness and terms for providing those services.

Evaluation Criteria

If the applicant has elected to provide food service, the plan should:

- Present a thorough, realistic and cost-effective food service plan; and

- Provide specific evidence of third party readiness (if selected) and terms for providing services consistent with the school's budget assumptions and state licensing laws.

If the applicant has elected not to provide food service, the plan should:

- Present a clear statement of the school's rationale for not providing such services;

- Describe viable nutritious lunch options for students;

- Describe how students who are not able to provide themselves with lunch will be accommodated; and

- Describe contingency plans for students requiring special foods due to a medical condition.

Evaluation Note

With the exception of related services required under an Individualized Education Plan, charter schools are not required to provide food service for students.

D.7 Closure Protocol

Applicant Instructions

Discuss closure protocol, outlining orderly plans and timelines for transitioning students and student records to new schools and for appropriately disposing of school funds, property and assets in the event of school closure.

Describe student records policy to support orderly transition for students transitioning out of the school.

Required Tab

35. School closure template

Evaluation Criteria

- A system of student, financial and asset records that will allow orderly transition in case of a closure;
- A plan for placement of students in new schools that meets their educational and geographic needs; and
- A plan for transfer of assets to entities that meet the requirements of the IRS and state law.

E. Education Service Providers

All applicants are asked to declare whether they intend to contract with an education service provider (ESP). The term "education service provider" refers to any number of organizations that contract with the Governing Board of a school to provide limited services, except for virtual school providers (see below)..The major types of ESPs that serve charter schools are education management organizations (EMOs), charter management organizations (CMOs), and comprehensive school design providers.

For the purposes of this RFP, the Maine Charter School Commission defines an EMO or a CMO as any for-or non-profit corporation or LLC that enters into contract with the entity holding the charter contract to provide significant managerial, technical or financial personnel or services in excess of $25,000 per year. Similarly, any for-or non-profit corporation or LLC that enters into a contract with the charter school entity that provides instructional materials or services including personnel, in excess of $25,000 per year shall be considered to be an ESP.

Applicant Instructions

Select the statement that is applicable and proceed as directed:

- We intend to contract with one or more education service provider. Continue with completion of this section.

- We do not intend to contract with any education service providers meeting any of the above definitions. Skip to the next section.

If the school expects to contract for services with an education service provider, discuss the school's decision to work with an ESP, in general, and the selected ESP, in particular. Describe how the selected ESP was chosen, the services desired were selected and how the fees were determined.

Discuss how the ESP's work with schools with similar populations was evaluated.

Provide contact information for other schools that have a similar contract with the selected ESP, including schools whose relationship with the ESP has been revoked.

Present the planned relationship between the school and the ESP and how that relationship will further the school's mission and program. Provide a clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP.

Describe the ESP's roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's management and Governing Board. Describe the school's performance expectations for the ESP and how the school will evaluate the ESP's performance.

Any proposed contract between the Governing Board of the proposed school and the ESP must contain language that permits the Governing Board to cancel said contract immediately, should the charter school be required to cease operation. Also, anything in the ESP contract that is contradictory to the charter contract is null and void.

Required Tabs

36. Background information on the ESP including relevant performance data for other schools that the ESP has managed

37. A list of any other schools managed by the ESP with contact information

38. The services agreement as executed between the school and the ESP (or final negotiated draft version if not yet executed) with an explanation of the duration and services to be provided

Evaluation Criteria

The response should present a clear picture of the contractual relationship and accountability between the ESP and the school's Governing Board that is consistent with the school's mission and educational program and includes:

- A persuasive explanation of how and why the education service provider was selected;

- Evidence of the educational service provider's success in serving student populations similar to the targeted population, including demonstrated academic achievement, as well as, successful management of non-academic school functions if applicable;

- A detailed explanation of the roles and responsibilities provided by the ESP;
- A detailed explanation of the scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP;
- A detailed explanation of the performance evaluation measures and timelines;
- A detailed explanation of the compensation structure the school will pay to the ESP, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP. This section should also include methods and timeline for contract oversight and enforcement, investment disclosure of the ESP and specific conditions for renewal and termination of the contract between the charter school and the ESP;
- A statement of assurance that the Governing Board and school leadership are legally and operationally independent from the ESP;
- Description of the relationship among the Governing Board, the school leadership, the management team and the service provider and a detailed explanation of how the school leadership and the Governing Board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the ESP, and the internal controls that will guide that process and how the Board and school leadership will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations;
- Disclosure of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the Governing Board, the school's leadership and management team and the ESP or any affiliated business entities;
- A copy of the service contract providing information on the proposed duration of the service contract and the services to be provided; and
- If the ESP is to provide services to students with identified special needs, explain the process for developing and implementing individual educational plans for this particular student population.