

Generation 32

Open-Enrollment Charter School



Instructions and Guidance

Subchapter D - New Operators
Subchapter D - Experienced Operators
Subchapter E - Public College and Public Universities

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INTRODUCTION

Note: The commissioner rules in effect during the time of the charter school application process will apply.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) welcomes applications for high-quality charter schools seeking to open for the 2028–2029 school year. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this entire document and the corresponding Charter Request for Application (New Operator RFA 701-27-103, Experienced Operator RFA 701-27-101, and Subchapter E RFA 701-27-102) before developing any application content.

The commissioner of education (the commissioner) is actively committed to attracting charter applicants who are capable of operating high-quality charter schools. The information requested through the application will inform the commissioner's decision to propose Generation 32 charter awards.

On May 30, 1995, the Texas Legislature created the Public Charter School Program to maintain a portfolio of secular, tuition-free, public charter schools that:

- Improve student learning;
- Increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public-school system;
- Create professional opportunities that attract new teachers to the public-school system;
- Establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and
- Encourage different and innovative learning methods.

The commissioner has vested authority to award Subchapter D Open-Enrollment charters and Subchapter E College/University charters (Texas Education Code (TEC), §§12.101 and 12.152, respectively). Pursuant to statute, the commissioner must adopt an open-enrollment charter application form, procedures, and evaluation criteria to be used in determining whether to award a charter. Collectively, the (1) Instructions and Guidance; (2) Application; and (3) Evaluation Criteria fulfill this requirement.

TYPES OF APPLICANTS

Generation 32 applicants are identified as a Subchapter D (1) New Operator, and (2) Experienced Operator, or Subchapter E (3) Public Colleges and Public Universities.

A Subchapter D **New Operator** is an eligible entity that has not operated a charter before and is seeking a state-authorized charter under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter D.

A Subchapter D **Experienced Operator** is an eligible entity that (1) is affiliated with an out-of-state Charter Management Organization with multiple years of academic performance data, or (2) operates a district-authorized charter campus in Texas with multiple years of academic performance data, or (3) is incorporated in the state of Texas but operates and/or manages at least one charter school or campus with multiple years of academic performance data outside of Texas.

For purposes of this application, a **Charter Management Organization** (CMO) constitutes any third-party entity, whether nonprofit or for-profit, that provides comprehensive and contractual education management services to educational providers.

A Subchapter E **Public Colleges and Universities** is an eligible entity that currently is a public junior college or public university as defined in TEC, Section 61.003.

SPONSORING ENTITY AND CHARTER HOLDER

During the application process, the eligible entity applying for a charter shall be referred to as the “sponsoring entity” or “applicant” or “charter applicant.” The term “charter holder” is exclusively reserved for applicants who are awarded a charter after the application process. The charter holder is the entity to which public education funds are paid if the application is approved by the commissioner and a contract is signed.

Prior to the submission of an application, TEA staff members are limited to fielding general inquiries that are associated with timelines and the overall application process. TEA staff members may not speak to application content.

The commissioner will assign priority points to applications that propose to operate an open-enrollment charter school within the boundaries of the attendance zone of a campus assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the past two years, pursuant to [TEC, §39.054](#). The application scoring process will also allow for the award of additional priority points for applicants committed to operating within a Qualified Opportunity Zone.

SUBCHAPTER D ELIGIBILITY

Operators of open-enrollment charter schools within the state of Texas must qualify as an eligible entity as defined in [TEC, §12.101](#). The state may grant open-enrollment charters to the following entities:

- An institution of higher education as defined under [TEC, §61.003\(8\)](#);
- A private or independent institution of higher education as defined under [TEC, §61.003\(15\)](#);
- An organization that is exempt from taxation under [Section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#), Internal Revenue Code of 1986 [26 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 501(c)(3)]; or
- A governmental entity.

Important: All applicants who apply as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization must provide a Letter of Determination from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) prior to receiving the Commissioner’s recommendation. Applicants are highly encouraged to file all relevant documents with the IRS as soon as possible.

Churches and other faith-based organizations exempt from taxation under [Section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#) of the Internal Revenue Code are **not** considered eligible entities.

Pursuant to [TEC, §12.101\(b\)](#), the commissioner may not award a charter to an entity that has within the preceding 10 years had a charter issued under TEC, Chapter 12 or a similar charter issued under the laws of another state surrendered under a settlement agreement, revoked, denied renewal, or returned. The commissioner will not consider an application submitted by an entity that is a corporate affiliate of or substantially related to an entity that has within the preceding 10 years had a charter issued under TEC, Chapter 12 or a similar charter issued under the laws of another state surrendered under a settlement agreement, revoked, denied renewal, or returned.

The TEA will make determinations on eligibility during the completion check process. Applications that are deemed to be ineligible will be removed from any further consideration during the Generation 32 application cycle.

Additionally, for eligibility purposes, the proposed school model must comply with allowable provisions under state law. If the model is not executable under current law, then the application can be removed from consideration.

SUBCHAPTER E ELIGIBILITY

Operators of open-enrollment charter schools within the state of Texas must qualify as an eligible entity as defined in [TEC §12.101](#). The state may grant open-enrollment charters to the following entities:

- A public junior college; or
- A public senior college or university

Pursuant to [TEC §12.101\(b\)](#), the commissioner may not award a charter to an entity that has within the preceding 10 years had a charter issued under TEC, Chapter 12 or a similar charter issued under the laws of another state surrendered under a settlement agreement, revoked, denied renewal, or returned. The commissioner will not consider an application submitted by an entity that is a corporate affiliate of or substantially related to an entity that has within the preceding 10 years had a charter issued under TEC, Chapter 12 or a similar charter issued under the laws of another state surrendered under a settlement agreement, revoked, denied renewal, or returned.

The TEA will make determinations on eligibility during the completion check process. Applications that are deemed to be ineligible will be removed from any further consideration during the Generation 32 application cycle.

Additionally, for eligibility purposes, the proposed school model must comply with allowable provisions under state law. If the model is not executable under current law, then the application can be removed from consideration.

FULL-TIME VIRTUAL AND FULL-TIME HYBRID CAMPUSES

[Senate Bill 569](#) establishes Chapter 30B of the Texas Education Code to create a new legal framework for full-time virtual and full-time hybrid public school programs. The purpose of this bill is to:

- Expand access to high-quality virtual learning options for Texas Students,
- Provide clear guidelines for authorization, oversight, and accountability of these programs,
- Ensure that virtual and hybrid campuses meet rigorous academic, operational, and funding standards, and,
- Allow districts and charter schools to serve eligible students through flexible, innovative instructional models.

Student Eligibility Requirements

Full-Time Virtual Campus

- A student is eligible to enroll in a full-time virtual campus if the student:
 - Attended a public school in this state for a minimum of six weeks in the current school year or in the preceding school year;
 - is, in the school year in which the student first seeks to enroll in the full-time virtual campus, enrolled in the first grade or a lower grade level;
 - was not required to attend public school in this state due to non-residency during the preceding school year;
 - is a dependent of a member of the United States military who has been deployed; or
 - has been placed in substitute care in this state.

Full-Time Hybrid Campus

- A student eligible to enroll in a public school is eligible to enroll at a full-time hybrid campus

Additional Program Requirements

Applicants are encouraged to review the additional program requirements outlined in [Senate Bill 569](#).

Important: A campus approved under this subchapter may only apply for and receive authorization to operate as a full-time hybrid campus or a full-time virtual campus. A campus may not change its operation designation during the authorization process or after the campus is authorized.

Application Submission

To be considered for authorization to operate a full-time virtual/full-time hybrid campus, an applicant must complete both the Subchapter D application and the [addendum](#). Incomplete submissions, including failure to complete all required components, will result in the application being deemed ineligible for review.

Note: Offering a virtual or online course within a brick-and-mortar campus does not, by itself, require submission of the Hybrid or Virtual Campus Addendum. Please review the definitions of Full-Time Virtual and Full-Time Hybrid campus to determine if you need to submit the additional addendum.

GENERATION 32 TIMELINE

Key dates from the Generation 32 application timeline are listed in the table below. More detail about the application process is provided in the sections that follow the table.

Activity	Dates
Request for Application Published	July 23, 2026
Information Sessions	August 4 and August 11, 2026
Application Submission Deadline	November 12, 2026
Completion Check	November 16–December 11, 2026
Remedy Period	December 14–December 18, 2026
Determination Notifications sent to Applicants: Removal or Advancement to External Review	January 8, 2027*
External Review of Complete Applications	January 13–March 19, 2027
Additional Read Window (automatic)	March 22–25, 2027
Determination Notifications sent to Applicants: Determination of Advancement to Capacity Interview	April 2, 2027*
Capacity Interviews with representatives from the Texas Education Agency and the State Board of Education	May 4–14, 2027
Commissioner Proposes Awards	May 28, 2027*
State Board of Education Meeting	June 2027

*On or around date listed

KEY DATES FOR APPLICANTS

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA) PUBLISHED: July 23, 2026

Notification of the RFA publication is posted in the Texas Register, on the TEA Division of Charter School Authorizing website, and subscribers are notified via the TEA GovDelivery System.

APPLICANT INFORMATION SESSION: August 4 and 11, 2026

Two information sessions will be held via Zoom, an online platform for video conferences and webinars. These sessions are held to provide additional information to applicants about procedures and general considerations for the application process. The attendance of at least one member of the applicant team is required. In addition, the board president must also attend if the applicant has already formed the sponsoring entity at the time of the session.

Applicants must register online for at least one of the information sessions which will be posted on TEA's website at <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/texas-schools-charter-schools/charter-school-applicants>.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE: November 12, 2026

Applications must be submitted electronically. Electronic copies must be submitted to <https://tea.sharefile.com/r-rdfab05c466f64f76a7c8bd586f7c4d76> by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.

Please note, any application documents submitted after 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time **may render the entire application incomplete**. Applicants must ensure sufficient time to upload all documents prior to the submission deadline.

Important: Applicants may contact TEA staff for clarifications regarding required fields in the application and for assembly procedures; however, an applicant must not initiate contact with any TEA staff or SBOE member regarding the content of the application from the time the application is submitted and ending on the date applicants conclude the external review process.

Applications that are removed from consideration (for lack of eligibility, lack of completion, failure to make the required cut score, plagiarism, etc.) are still subject to the no-contact provision.

COMPLETION CHECK: November 16, 2026–December 11, 2026

TEA staff members conduct the initial application review, checking for statutory eligibility, completeness, and plagiarism violations. Applications that pass the completion check will proceed to the external review stage.

For an application to be deemed complete, applicants must:

- ✓ Submit a completed Application Package electronically by the application deadline;

- ✓ Respond to all applicable narratives and special assurances;
- ✓ Include all applicable attachments and their coversheets;
- ✓ Ensure that prohibited materials are not included pursuant to the Public Disclosure Policy;
- ✓ Prepare the Application Package in compliance with all instructions provided; and
- ✓ Ensure completeness in both form and assembly.

Submitted application narrative documents that are significantly disordered or omit required narratives are subject to immediate removal from consideration. **Please do not submit narrative documents that are only partially complete.**

EXTERNAL REVIEW PERIOD: January 13, 2027–March 19, 2027

All eligible applications that have successfully passed the completion check are assigned to five independent parties for external review and scoring. Each application will be reviewed on its own merits and scored in accordance with the evaluation criteria published by the TEA.

Evaluation criteria for each narrative section are included in the “Terminology, Resources, and Evaluation Criteria” section of this guide. External reviewers will score each applicable criterion. The average of all five reviews must be equal to or greater than 85% for the applicant to advance to the capacity interview.

ADDITIONAL REVIEW PERIOD: March 22-25, 2027

Applications that fall within five percentage points of the 85% threshold to advance (i.e., between 80 and 84.9%) will receive one additional external review during the additional review period. If the final adjusted score (incorporating the score from the sixth review) exceeds 85%, the application will advance to the capacity interview stage.

CAPACITY INTERVIEWS: May 4–May 14, 2027

Qualifying applicants (i.e., those meeting the 85% threshold to advance) will be invited to participate in a formal interview with TEA staff and State Board of Education (SBOE) members. During the interview, applicants will have the opportunity to field questions and demonstrate their capacity to open and operate a high-quality charter school.

Important: Interview days and times are provided by TEA staff and are not subject to negotiation.

All applicants that hold 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation status **must** have both: (1) the president of the governing board of the sponsoring entity; and (2) the superintendent (if identified) in attendance at the capacity interview. Applicants that qualify as Institutions of Higher Education must have: (1) at least one member who currently holds a position on the governing board of the institution of higher education/governmental entity; and (2) the superintendent (if identified) of the proposed charter school in attendance at the capacity interview.

PROPOSED CHARTER AWARDS: May 28, 2027

The commissioner reviews all relevant application information and proposes awards. In order to be proposed for award, an applicant must attain a score of 85% or better on the application and demonstrate sufficient capability during the capacity interview.

SBOE ACTION ON PROPOSED CHARTERS: June 2027

The SBOE may veto any Subchapter D charter proposed within 90 days of the commissioner's proposal. Charter applicants proposed for award are required to attend the June 2027 SBOE meeting on the assigned days.

A charter applicant will proceed to the contingency period if the SBOE does not veto the commissioner's proposed award. All determinations of the commissioner related to charter awards are final and carry no right of appeal. Applicants that are not awarded a charter during the Generation 32 cycle are welcome to reapply during future application cycles.

CONTINGENCY PERIOD: Within two months of receipt

Following SBOE's action (or inaction) on the commissioner's proposed charter awards, the proposed charter applicants must work with TEA staff to resolve any issues that were identified during the application review or capacity interview process. All contingencies must be satisfactorily addressed within two months of receipt of agency required contingencies. A charter will not be awarded—and a contract will not be drafted—unless all issues are resolved by this date. After all contingencies are addressed, contracts will be issued with county-district numbers.

OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT

A contract for an open-enrollment charter school between the charter holder and the commissioner of education must incorporate the following:

- ✓ All applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations;
- ✓ The charter holder's completed application response to RFA 701-27-103 for new operators, RFA 701-27-101 for experienced operators, and RFA 701-27-102 for Subchapter E;
- ✓ Any condition, amendment, modification, revision, or other change to the charter adopted or ratified by the commissioner; and
- ✓ All statements, assurances, commitments, and representations (written or oral) made by the charter holder during the generation application cycle.

The initial term of the charter is five years.

The execution of a charter contract constitutes an assurance by the charter applicant that no false information was submitted to the TEA or the commissioner by the charter applicant, its agents, or employees in support of the proposed open-enrollment charter. Any actions that are inconsistent with the terms and requirements of the charter shall constitute a material violation of the charter contract.

The commissioner will periodically evaluate each open-enrollment charter school. The commissioner may revise, revoke, modify the governance of, or deny renewal of the charter if the commissioner determines that the charter holder has failed to satisfy any of the student, financial, compliance, and/or health and safety performance standards set out in 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), [§§100.1037-100.1055](#). The procedures for commissioner action and intervention are outlined in [TEC, §12.116](#) and 19 TAC, [§§100.1037-100.1055](#). In addition to the adverse actions described above, a charter school is also subject to the sanctions and interventions authorized by [TEC, Chapters 39 and 39A](#).

APPROVAL AND AWARD PROCESS

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK AND EFFECTIVE DISTRICT FRAMEWORK

The [Effective Schools Framework](#) (ESF) and [Effective District Framework \(EDF\)](#) provide a clear vision of best practices that were developed in conjunction with school and district leaders about what makes high-performing schools and districts excellent. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review and consider the ESF and EDF as primary resources for effective strategies to support powerful teaching and learning.

CRITERIA

At the conclusion of all applicant interviews, the commissioner will formally propose awards for open-enrollment charters to applicants who have demonstrated the capacity to open and operate high-quality charter schools. In addition to the overall quality, completeness of the Application Package, and presentation during the interview, the commissioner will consider demonstrations of the following:

- ✓ Strength of the proposed board and leadership teams;
- ✓ Strength of the national portfolio, if applicable;
- ✓ Demonstrated improvement in student performance, if applicable;
- ✓ Displays of innovative thought and practice;
- ✓ Recruitment strategies that will likely achieve the projected enrollment for the first years of operation;
- ✓ Impact statements from any school district whose enrollment is likely to be affected by the proposed charter school, including information relating to any financial difficulty that a loss in enrollment may have on a district;
- ✓ Evidence of parental and community support for the proposed charter school;
- ✓ Qualifications and backgrounds of all individuals who will be involved in the management and educational leadership of the proposed charter school;
- ✓ History of the charter applicant, if applicable;
- ✓ Evidence that the proposed governance structure will establish and maintain sound fiscal management and administrative practices;
- ✓ Strength of the proposed financial plan;

- ✓ Plans to ensure services will begin on the date proposed in the application; and
- ✓ Indications that the proposed charter school will expand the variety of charter schools in the following ways:
 - Instructional settings,
 - Diverse student populations and programs,
 - Diverse geographic regions, and
 - Representation in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

APPLICATION PACKAGE COMPONENTS

Applicants must complete and submit the following, collectively referred to as the Application Package:

- Application narrative document
- Letter of Special Assurances
- Application attachments
- (Optional) [Addendum](#)

APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS

Application page count

- Limit the narrative document to 100 pages (this **does not include** the Table of Contents, Application Checklist, Applicant Profile Page, and the Letter of Special Assurances). The narrative document will automatically paginate.

Attachments and Addendum section

- All attachment directions and coversheets are hyperlinked on the attachment checklist page and each relevant section of the narrative document.
- All attachments should be submitted **in order** based on how they appear in the **Attachment Checklist**.
- All attachments must be combined and submitted as one **Attachments Submission Document**. This does not include the Financial Plan Workbook or Portfolio Overview Workbook. These documents are submitted as separate Excel documents.
- Submit all attachment coversheets for each attachment. If an attachment is not applicable, please indicate **“no responsive documents”** on the coversheet.
- There is **no page limit** on the Attachments Submission Document, but individual attachments may have page limits.
- There is **no page limit** on the Addendum document.

Disclosure

Where requested in this application, and to the extent permitted by law, all applicants must provide full and complete disclosure. Applications found to omit any required disclosure, in full or in part, will be removed from the application cycle with no further review. This decision cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence

If, at any time during the evaluation process, TEA staff find that an application contains plagiarized or AI generated content, it will be removed from the application process and excluded from further review during the Generation 32 application cycle. This decision cannot be appealed.

The TEA defines plagiarism as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in an application. The TEA is cognizant that to discuss an existing curriculum, instructional framework, or educational model, key concepts must be mentioned. It is not acceptable to copy and paste a description from another source, unless that source was originally produced by the same affiliated entity in any other published materials. The majority of each narrative response should be original writing and thinking with citations to support specific assertions or descriptions.

Style Guidance

Narrative responses should be brief and specific whenever possible. It is most helpful if descriptions of vision, processes, and design are clear and concise rather than abstract or general. Do not repeat content discussed in other sections of the application. If needed, applicants may refer to or cite other responses in the narrative or attachment sections.

SUBMISSION

Applicants are requested to submit the charter application via ShareFile. This service is a web-based interface that allows for the sharing of large files in a secure environment.

- Click <https://tea.sharefile.com/r-rdfab05c466f64f76a7c8bd586f7c4d76>.
- The first screen will require the following:
 - Email: use the email that was provided for the applicant's main contact;
 - First/Last Name: use the main contact that was listed in the applicant's proposal;
 - Company: use the name of the sponsoring entity
- The submission should include **three** (up to five) files.
 - The **first file** will be the completed **Narrative Document**.
 - The **second file** will be the **Attachments Submission Document**. (Note the attachments should be in order of how they appear on the Attachment Checklist)
 - The **third file** will be the completed Excel version of the **Financial Plan Workbook**.
 - If an applicant is an experienced operator, the **fourth file** will be the Excel version of the **Portfolio Overview Workbook**.
 - The **fifth file** will be the **Addendum** for all applicants who propose to open at least one full-time virtual and/or full-time hybrid campus
- Click the **upload button** in the lower left corner.

- Once the submission has been made, the application is considered electronically delivered and final. Applicants will not be able to make additional submissions or revisions to the original.

All submissions have timestamps and will constitute the official date and time of submission. File size and transmission issues could cause severe delays between submission and receipt of the application package. For this reason, the time stamp included in the submission email (received by the Division of Authorizing) will be considered the official date and time of submission.

Agency staff will be standing by to provide technical assistance for submission deadlines. Any technical issues should be communicated to staff prior to the deadline for either the initial submission or the submission of cure documents. **Technical issues communicated after the fact will not be considered in determining the completeness or timeliness of any submission.**

TERMINOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

LANDSCAPE:

Geographic Area to Be Served

What is a Geographic Area?

Applicants must identify one or more geographic areas from which they plan to enroll students. A geographic area can be a community, city, region, etc.

LANDSCAPE:

Demographic Projections

Demographic Projections

Applicants must use demographic data from the most recent Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) to complete the Demographic Projections table. Data is available on the [TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports](https://tea.texas.gov/academic-performance-reports) website and [TXschools.gov](https://txschools.gov).

All data should be reported as a percentage (%).

Projections for Campus [Year 1]

Realistic and/or justified demographic projections for all Year 1 campuses should reflect a careful analysis of the (1) target community, (2) district of location, and (3) contiguous districts. Funds may be affected (in Year 1) if the applicant overestimates the projected student population.

District of Location

This term refers to the traditional ISD in which the first campus will be located. Applicants who propose to operate at least one full-time virtual and/or full-time hybrid campus may use the traditional ISD in which the administrative office will be located.

Evaluation Criteria

Demographic Projections

Strong Responses:

- Presents a set of reasons and/or logical bases for serving the proposed community (whereas) such reasons are supported by at least one of the following: 1) specific academic achievement gaps within the proposed community; (2) lack of current access to the proposed model; and/or (3) verifiable community interest.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: Mission, Vision, Design Elements

Effective Schools Framework and Effective District Framework

The [Effective Schools Framework](#) (ESF) and [Effective District Framework \(EDF\)](#) provide a clear vision of best practices that were developed in conjunction with school and district leaders about what makes high-performing schools and districts excellent. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review and consider the ESF as a primary resource for effective strategies to support powerful teaching and learning.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF) [Lever 1](#), Essential Actions 1.2 and 1.3 and TEA's Effective District Framework (EDF) [Lever 1](#), Essential Actions 1.1.

Mission

A statement that explains the fundamental purpose of the school.

Vision

A statement that describes what the school will achieve over the long term.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are values and standards that inform and lead the school's operations, and should foster continuous improvement mindsets.

Design Elements

The Texas Education Agency does not require any specific design element. The following list is representative of elements used by prior applicants. Any selected model should clearly support the proposed school's mission and vision and be integrated into the overall proposal.

- Project-Based Learning
- Community-Based Learning
- Inclusive Learning
- Creative Learning
- Competency-Based Learning

TERMINOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

An applicant should be able to answer: How or in what way is the educational design:

- Encouraging different and innovative learning methods in the proposed area,
- Tailored to the needs of all student groups served,
- Beneficial to all of the impacted student populations upon completion of the program?

Evaluation Criteria

Mission, Vision, Design Elements

Strong Responses:

- Presents a mission statement that is student-centered and guided by identifiable values.
- Presents a vision statement that is focused on identifiable outcomes for students in the future.
- Presents a thorough series of design principles that will provide (1) innovative learning experiences and knowledge development, (2) targeted student supports, and (3) safe learning environments.
- Provides relevant evidence such as, but not limited to, (1) local and/or context-specific data, (2) survey data, (3) research-based, and/or (4) pilot program data.
- Presents an overall clear and robust educational program for the proposed charter school.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: Goal Setting

Student Outcome Smart Goals

Student outcomes describe what students will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate when they have completed or participated in the educational program. Student Outcome SMART Goals must include progress measures.

Accountability Domain

Applicants are encouraged to review the TEA's 2026 [Accountability Manual](#), which describes the state accountability system and identifies specific accountability domains.

House Bill 3: Additional Board and District Goal Setting

House Bill 3, passed during the 86th Texas Legislature, requires school boards to adopt detailed plans developed by their management teams that achieve goals in two areas: (1) early childhood literacy and mathematics proficiency, and (2) college, career, and military readiness. Applicants are encouraged to review a summary of these requirements available through this [video](#).

Additional Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review the TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), [Lever 1](#), Essential Action 1.3 and TEA's Effective District Framework (EDF) [Lever 1](#), Essential Actions 1.1.

Evaluation Criteria

Goal Setting

Strong Responses:

- Identifies three outcome goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound that are realistically achievable within the first year of operation.
- Provides (1) specific and measurable indicators, (2) an appropriate reporting cadence, and (3) explicit actions to hold the superintendent accountable for timely progress.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: Performance Management and Data-Driven Instruction

Mandatory Grade Offerings

Charter schools must enroll and serve students in at least one state-tested grade by the beginning of the third year of operation so that the charter school receives an accountability rating at the end of its third year. See [19 9 TAC, §100.1017\(c\)\(3\)\(H\)](#) Early Childhood Education Monitoring.

Learn more about the [Commissioner's List of Approved Prekindergarten Progress Monitoring Instruments](#).

State Assessments

Texas' student assessment program is designed to measure the extent to which a student has learned and is able to apply the knowledge and skills at each tested grade or course identified in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the statewide curriculum. In spring 2012, Texas students began taking the state of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®). The assessments are administered to students in grades 3–8 and high school. The state also offers STAAR Alternate 2 for students who have significant cognitive disabilities and are receiving special education services. Eligibility criteria can be found on the [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#) webpage.

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) and the TELPAS Alternate are provided to assess the progress that emergent bilingual students make in learning the English language. More information about these testing programs can be found on the [TELPAS](#) and [TELPAS Alternate Resources](#) webpages.

Additional Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review the TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), [Level 4](#), Essential Action 4.1.2, and [Lever 5](#), Essential Actions 5.3 and 5.4 and TEA's Effective District Framework (EDF) [Lever 4](#), Essential Actions 4.1 and [Lever 5](#), Essential Actions 5.3.

Evaluation Criteria

Performance Management and Data-Driven Instruction

Strong Responses:

- Present a fully developed plan for the local assessment program to be administered including all formative and summative assessments.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Provide a description that includes (1) clear steps for analyzing student performance data and (2) defined uses of the data to address learning gaps.

PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: Start-Up Plan

Federal Start-Up Grant

The Charter School Program (CSP) Start-Up Grant is meant to provide new charter schools with financial assistance for charter school planning, program design, and initial implementation. Grant awards for Generation 32 applicants, as authorized by the commissioner of education, are subject to availability. Max awards could amount to \$900,000. **(Award amounts for future grant cycles are subject to change).**

The CSP grant application components have been included in the Generation 32 Application for charter.

Start-Up Grant Program Goals

The federal CSP grant program requires that applicants submit goals to measure milestones throughout the start-up process. These goals should reflect progress towards a successful launch of a high-quality academic program.

Note: The TEA provides mandatory start-up activities, and all Generation 32 CSP grant awards are subject to availability and eligibility. The completion, submission, and/ or ultimate award of a Generation 32 Open-Enrollment charter school does not entitle an applicant to CSP funds from the state of Texas.

Evaluation Criteria

Start-Up Year

Strong Responses:

- Provide a Start-Up Plan that includes detailed (1) tasks (2) timelines for each task, and (3) the individuals responsible for each task.
- Describe activities and expenditures that are appropriate for the preparation and operation of the proposed charter school.
- Identifies personnel, materials, and other expenses that support the outlined grant activities.
- Identifies reasonable funds that are necessary for achieving the objectives.
- Presents a clear plan indicating how the board will monitor the implementation of the start-up plan, start-up grant, and associated budget.
- Includes a clear plan for maintaining financial sustainability after the end of the grant period.
- Identifies at least three CSP grant program goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.
- Provides (1) specific and measurable indicators, (2) an appropriate reporting cadence, and (3) explicit actions to hold the superintendent accountable for timely progress.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND TALENTING: Formation, Structure, and Community

Important Skill Sets for Founding Boards

The following skill sets are representative of strong founding boards:

Finance

Accounting, Banking, Insurance, Risk Management, etc.

Facilities

Real Estate, Facility Finance, Construction/Facility Management

Educational Leadership

Charter School, Traditional ISD, Private School, and/or Higher Education

Fundraising

In-Person and Networking

Governance

Charter, Traditional ISD, Private School, and/or Higher Education

Human Resources

Employee Benefits, Grievances, Compensation, Annual Reviews

Public Relations

Marketing and Recruitment

Alignment with the Charter Contract

The responsibility of the governing board is to provide oversight and uphold the terms of the charter contract. Discussed below are areas most helpful for consideration in the organization of a charter school board.

Students

Board members should be aware of the school's enrollment including the student application and admissions process.

Educational Program

The quality of the educational program is a focus of the board, especially as it is tied to academic accountability. Applicants should review the state's [A–F accountability system](#).

TERMINOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Financial Management

The board oversees the operating budget for the school and the stewardship of funds.

The School's Mission

Part of the board's responsibility is to revisit the school's mission in serving children, to determine progress or lack thereof.

Governance

Members of the board must be aware of the bylaws that guide their actions and the legal requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act.

Operations

The board must be aware of issues relating to facility acquisition and management, as well as the maintenance of school records, and functions of the school.

Additional Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review the [TEA's Effective Schools Framework](#) (ESF), [TEA's Effective District Framework](#) (EDF), and the [Texas Framework for School Board Development](#).

Evaluation Criteria

Formation, Structure, and Community

Strong Responses:

- Demonstrate (1) skill sets that collectively reflect the essential operational, academic, financial, and governance functions required to launch an A or B rated campus; and (2) demonstrable experience as reflected in their professional resumes.
- Describe specific roles and responsibilities of the sponsoring entity, any partner organizations, and charter management organizations, as applicable, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND TALENT: Superintendent Position Profile

Superintendent Salary

Open-enrollment charter schools may not compensate an individual in excess of the fair market value of the services rendered. The fair market value of the services rendered is based on the individual's education, experience, prior salary history, job duties performed, and what a typical person with similar skills, experience, and job duties would earn. See [19 TAC, §100.1051 \(c\)\(1\)\(A\)\(i\)](#).

Superintendent Evaluation and Metrics

A charter school board must adopt an annual appraisal tool for the evaluation of the superintendent. State law provides two options: (1) boards may use the commissioner's recommended appraisal process and performance criteria; or (2) boards may develop their own appraisal process and performance criteria in consultation with the district and campus-level committees, and then adopted by the board. See [TEC, §21.354](#).

Evaluation Criteria

Superintendent Position Profile

Strong Responses:

- If applicable, provides compelling evidence to demonstrate that the proposed superintendent has the experience and/or skills to design, launch, and lead a high-quality school that serves the targeted population; or
- If applicable, provides compelling evidence to demonstrate that candidates for superintendent will be required to have the experience and/or skills to design, launch, and lead a high-quality school that serves the targeted population.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Demonstrate a clear process for how the superintendent will be evaluated, including frequency, the evaluation tool to be used, evaluators, and desired or expected outcomes.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND TALENT: Staffing, Leadership, and Professional Development

Talent Management

Talent management refers to a comprehensive system for recruiting, hiring, placing, training, and retaining high-quality staff.

Certification Requirements

Teachers employed by a charter school in Texas are not required to be certified except as indicated below. However, all principals and teachers must hold a baccalaureate degree. See [TEC, §12.129](#).

Requirement Exceptions

Special education teachers, bilingual teachers, teachers of English as a second language, and prekindergarten teachers must be certified in the fields they are assigned to teach, as required by state law. See Code of Federal Regulations [\(CFR\) §300.156](#) and [TEC, §12.104\(b\)\(3\)\(F-H\); §21.003, §29.061](#); and [§29.167](#).

PEIMS: Public Education Information Management System

The [Public Education Information Management System \(PEIMS\)](#) encompasses all data requested and received by TEA about public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information.

Charter schools are funded by student attendance which is routinely (1) prepared by the PEIMS coordinator or another assigned employee; (2) approved by the superintendent; and then (3) reported by the school. Inaccurate PEIMS submissions can decrease funding or cause financial recapture of funds.

Technical support is provided by the twenty educational service centers (ESCs) or by private vendors.

Instructional Leadership Teams

Instructional leadership teams (ILTs) are formed to improve instruction schoolwide to maximize student achievement. Roles and positions typically include, but are not limited to:

- Principal, if applicable
- Lead teachers representing various grade levels/subjects
- Special education teacher/coordinator
- Emergent Bilingual teacher/coordinator
- Instructional coaches

Additional Resources

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the [TEA's Effective Schools Framework](#) (ESF), particularly: [Lever 1](#), [Lever 2](#), and [Lever 5](#) and [TEA's Effective District Framework \(EDF\)](#).

Evaluation Criteria

Staffing, Leadership, and Professional Development

Strong Responses:

- Includes, in (Attachment) Organizational Charts, viable and adequate staffing plans to ensure fidelity to the model and are aligned with the financial plan workbook.
- Clearly describes the qualifications and certifications of instructional staff proposed for the school. At minimum, include (1) minimum educational requirements for instructors, (2) certification status expected of instructors, (3) any preferred subject-matter credentials, or (4) specialized training relevant to the school's instructional model.
- Provides a clear plan and timeline by which the school will distribute information to parents regarding the qualifications of each professional employee in accordance with Texas Education Code, Chapter 21, Subchapter B.
- Clearly identifies the position(s) that will facilitate PEIMS activities, includes adequate qualifications, and training prior to Year 1.
- Identifies clear roles, responsibilities, and qualifications of the school's instructional leadership team that will establish a strong foundation to implement the proposed model successfully.
- *(New Operators ONLY)* Outlines well-thought-out plans to ensure that the school remains fully staffed throughout the school year and has specific strategies for addressing potential staff turnover and/or staffing shortages.
- *(New Operators ONLY)* Provide high-quality induction opportunities for onboarding staff during Year 0, including specific plans to train teachers to implement the educational program.
- *(New Operators ONLY)* Ensure costs and compensation for staff induction opportunities, where applicable, are identified within the proposed budget as indicated in the Start-Up Plan and Financial Plan Workbook.
- *(New Operators ONLY)* Identify how the academic calendar provides professional development aligned to the assessment calendar and specifies protected time in the master schedule for teachers to meet regularly for in-depth, data-driven discussions to meet the needs of all learners.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND TALENT: Teacher Growth and Capacity Building

Teacher Support

Applicants may want to review TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), particularly [Lever 2](#), Essential Action 2.1.

New Teacher Mentoring

TEA currently offers the [Mentor Program Allotment](#) funding for campuses to implement in the mentoring of novice teachers. Discussion of program requirements can be found in TEC, [§48.114](#), [§21.458](#), and 19 TAC, [§153.1011](#).

Teacher Incentive Allotment

The passing of House Bill 3 by the 86th legislature established the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) program which allows for compensation rewards for highly effective teachers. More information about the program and application can be found at the TIA [website](#).

Evaluation Criteria *(New Operators ONLY)*

Teacher Growth and Capacity Building

Strong Responses:

- Presents a detailed plan to support and develop all teachers each school year, including personnel responsible for overseeing teachers' development and growth.
- Demonstrate a clear process for how teachers will be held to high performance expectations through evaluations, including frequency, evaluation tool to be used, evaluators, and desired or expected outcomes.
- Presents a clear and actionable plan detailing how the school will provide targeted support to teachers who require performance growth.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT SUPPORTS: High-Quality Instructional Materials

State-Required Standards

The state of Texas requires all schools (including charters) to offer (1) foundational curriculum and (2) enrichment curriculum. See TEC, [§12.111\(a\)\(1\)](#). While charter schools enjoy curricular and instructional flexibility, an applicant must outline certain curriculum and standards in their proposal. See Texas Administrative Code §74. Required curriculum can be found on the Texas Education Agency Curriculum Division [website](#). Applicants should ensure that all instructional materials are compliant with all state law. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the state standards, also known as the [Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills \(TEKS\)](#), and the [English Language Proficiency Standards \(ELPS\)](#).

[High-Quality Instructional Materials](#) are materials that: (1) are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), (2) have a comprehensive and cohesive scope and sequence, (3) include lesson-level materials with engaging texts (books, multimedia, etc.), problems, and assessments, and (4) are externally validated or research based.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the list of prohibited instructional materials.

Lastly, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), particularly: [Lever 4](#), Essential Action 4.1 and TEA's Effective District Framework (EDF) particularly: [Lever 5](#) Essential Action 5.3.

Evaluation Criteria

High-Quality Instructional Materials

Strong Responses:

- Identify high-quality instructional materials or curricular resources for developing instructional materials (or plans to adopt materials) that are grade-level appropriate, aligned to the TEKS, and compliant with state law.
- Provide a clear rationale for the selection of instructional materials and how they meet the definition of high-quality. If developing instructional materials locally, cites guiding research behind the design of local instructional materials.
- Identify a clear plan to routinely audit all instructional materials and/or curricular resources for compliance with state law.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Provide a thorough process for systematic review, adoption, continuous improvement of High-Quality Instructional Material (HQIM) that will follow local board policy, including personnel responsible. If developing instructional materials locally, describes a realistic and actionable plan for ensuring the materials will continue to meet the definition of high quality, including personnel responsible.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT SUPPORTS: Special Populations

Special Populations

The purpose of the Special Populations section is to outline district-level structures and processes related to identifying students for special programs, developing a range of programs that will meet students' needs, monitoring students' progress over time, and evaluating the success of those programs. The TEA expects applicants to demonstrate that they have knowledge and capacity to serve all students well. This includes having specialized expertise in effectively serving students with disabilities, emergent bilingual students, and other student groups.

Key State Law

Applicants should review [Texas Education Code Chapter 29](#) for an exhaustive description of special population program requirements: Special Education (Subchapter A), Bilingual and Special Language Programs (Subchapter B), and Gifted and Talented Students (Subchapter D).

Key Federal Law

Key federal statutes include:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990,
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA),
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Special Education Resources

View TEA's [Special Education](#) website and the [Rules and Regulations Related to Special Education](#).

Dyslexia Resources

State-required procedures for screening and supporting students with dyslexia can be found on TEA's [Dyslexia Handbook](#) website.

Emergent Bilingual Resources

View TEA's [Supporting Emergent Bilingual Students in Texas](#) website and [Resources Related to Program Implementation](#).

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Explore TEA's [TIER \(Tiered Interventions Using Evidence-Based Research\) module](#) for the MTSS framework and additional resources to implement an effective intervention program.

Additional Resources

Applicants that propose to serve early education and elementary grades should review the [Prekindergarten Guidelines](#) and requirements with [House Bill 3](#), including: implementation of a [K-3 phonics curriculum](#), attendance at literacy achievement academies, and required full-day pre-k for all eligible 4-year-olds (if pre-k is offered).

Applicants may find valuable information on accelerated student learning on the TEA [Accelerated Learning Resources](#) webpage.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), particularly: [Lever 3](#), essential action 3 and [Lever 5](#), essential action 4

Evaluation Criteria

Special Populations [Special Education, Emergent Bilingual Students, Early Childhood, and At-Risk Students]

Strong Responses:

Special Education Students

- Identify adequate numbers of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and/or specialty teachers.
- Discuss specific plans and capacity to address the needs of students with disabilities through identification of students, meeting Child Find requirements, and the evaluation process, without restating compliance language and tailored to the model of the proposed school.
- Discuss specific plans and capacity to address the needs of students with disabilities through continuum of services, plans to ensure access to FAPE in all contexts of the school in accordance with the student's Individual Education Plans and 504 plans, and transition plans for high school students (if applicable). Response is tailored to the model of the proposed school.
- Include a plan for board members and school leaders to continually evaluate the effectiveness of programs designed for special populations and the process for making changes for improvement.
- (*Experienced Operators ONLY*) Identify current and/or past issues of noncompliance with SPED services and evidence that compliance was renewed and/or reasonable corrective actions were taken.

Emergent Bilingual Students

- Identify adequate numbers of bilingual/ESL teachers, paraprofessionals, and/or specialty teachers.
- Identify the specific bilingual education program/model to be implemented and discuss specific plans and capacity to address the needs of emergent bilingual students, including descriptions of a system for identifying students, staff responsible for serving identified

students and respective qualifications without restating compliance language and tailored to the model of the proposed school.

- Discuss specific plans to ensure emergent bilingual students have access to grade-level academic content, plans for monitoring student progress and language proficiency, plans for exiting from services, and plans to ensure equitable access in all contexts of the school model.

Early Childhood and At-Risk Students

- Discuss specific plans and capacity to address the needs of underperforming and at-risk students, including: (1) descriptions of specific support services, and (2) staff who will be responsible for overseeing and facilitating those services.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) If offering early elementary grades, selects a research-based literacy curriculum that meets the requirements of the science of teaching reading and provides a reasonable explanation for how effectiveness will be evaluated.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Detail the accelerated instruction program to be implemented to support student mastery of grade-level TEKS, including specific details about scheduling arrangements and identified high-quality tutoring materials.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Identify personnel responsible for implementing an MTSS program, including collecting student data, a process for scheduling tutoring, and a process for monitoring student progress from the interventions.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT SUPPORTS: Promotion, Retention, and Graduation

Promotion Requirements

Texas law requires a student demonstrate academic achievement of required subject matter in order to be promoted to the next grade. To determine whether a student has reached academic achievement, the school will examine a student's grades, teacher recommendations, STAAR scores, and other academic information.

State Graduation Requirements

Students follow the high school graduation plan that was in place when they began ninth grade. The four [graduation plans](#) currently in use require students to earn 22 to 26 course credits. The state's newest graduation plan, created by House Bill 5 and passed during the 2013 Texas legislative session, is called the [Foundation High School Program](#). Students entering ninth grade beginning with the 2014–2015 school year are automatically enrolled in this graduation program.

Students must pass five end-of-course assessments to meet the testing requirements for graduation. Those tests cover Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History.

Additional Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review all data sources and academic accountability indicators used to assess [College, Career, and Military Readiness](#) (CCMR).

Evaluation Criteria

Promotion, Retention, and Graduation

Strong Responses:

- If offering a high school program, describe planned endorsement pathways, unique course offerings, or requirements that the proposed will implement as a part of the selected model/design while also supporting accountability measures for College, Career, and Military Readiness.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT SUPPORTS:

School Safety and Discipline

Applicants may learn about creating a positive culture in TEA's Effective Schools Framework, particularly [Lever 3](#).

School Uniforms

A charter school may adopt rules that require students at the school to wear school uniforms if the board determines that the requirement would improve the learning environment at the school. If adopted, the school must designate a source of funding that will be used in providing uniforms for students who are educationally disadvantaged. See [TEC, §11.162](#).

Campus Security Officers

The charter board must ensure that at least one armed security officer is present during regular school hours at each district campus. Applicants are encouraged to review [TEC, §37.0814](#) for complete information about armed security officer requirements.

Charter School Safety Requirements

Charter schools must comply with school safety requirements including those covered in [TEC §37.0814, §37.108, §37.1081, §37.1082, §37.1083, §37.1084, §37.1085, §37.1087, §37.113, §37.114, §37.1141, §37.115, §37.207, §37.2071, and Subchapter J, Chapter 37](#). A list of current rules can also be located in [19 TAC, Chapter 103, Subchapter CC](#).

Discipline Requirements

State law requires charter schools to adopt a code of conduct that outlines prohibited behaviors and possible consequences. The code of conduct must also outline the school's due process procedures with respect to expulsion. See [TEC, §12.131](#).

State discipline requirements are outlined in Texas Education Code, Chapter 37. Charter schools are not subject to the majority of Chapter 37 which allows for flexibility and innovation when adopting student discipline policies. See [TEC, §37.004](#) regarding disciplinary placements for students with disabilities. Data from the district of location and districts within the proposed geographic boundary of the school should be considered when planning a discipline approach.

Additional Resources

Applicants are encouraged to review the TEA's Effective Schools Framework (ESF), [Lever 3.2](#).

TERMINOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please note that a charter school cannot waive the following discipline requirements as stated in TEC Chapter 37:

- TEC, §37.0021 Use of confinement, restraint, seclusion, and time-out
- TEC, §12.131 Removal of students to disciplinary alternative education program; expulsion of students
- TEC, §37.0832 Bullying prevention policies and procedures
- TEC, §37.0052 Placement or expulsion of students who have engaged in certain bullying behavior
- TEC, §37.007 Expulsion for serious offenses
- TEC, §37.015 Reports to local law enforcement; liability
- TEC, §37.022 Notice of disciplinary action
- TEC, §37.011(a-4)(a-5) Juvenile justice alternative education program

Evaluation Criteria

School Safety and Discipline

Strong Responses:

- In the Proposed Discipline Policy, present a detailed discipline policy that outlines a thorough appeals process, equitable rights for students with disabilities, specific process(es) for providing services to students who are out of school for more than 10 days, and aligns with the proposed school model.
- (*New Operators ONLY*) Outline a reasonable plan to conduct analyses that will evaluate student discipline data and overidentification of any specific student group (*if applicable*).

OPERATIONS AND FINANCE:

Community Engagement and Student Recruitment

Admission and Enrollment Period

Texas charter schools must operate as open-enrollment educational entities whereby students are enrolled in the order that they applied. Charter schools have an annual application window with a specific time frame to apply for admission. Under state law, a charter school is to require the applicant to complete the common admission application by a reasonable deadline established by the school. See [TEC, Education Code §12.117](#).

Admissions Lottery

If there are still available seats, students will be enrolled on a first-come basis. If the school has more applications than available enrollment slots, the campus is considered “oversubscribed.”

If a campus is oversubscribed, a charter school must either fill the positions (1) by lottery, or (2) fill the available positions in the order in which applications were received by the application deadline. See [TEC, §12.117\(a\)\(2\)](#). Recipients of the Charter School Start-Up Grant must agree to conduct a lottery.

Exemptions to Admissions Lotteries

State statute and rules allow a charter school to exempt (1) siblings of enrolled students and (2) children of founders and employees from admissions lotteries. See [Texas Education Code §12.117\(d\)](#), and [19 TAC, §100.1207\(b\)](#).

A charter school must also immediately enroll a homeless child or youth if there are available seats, even if the child or youth has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness per the McKinney-Vento Act. See [42 U.S.C. § 11432\(g\)\(3\)\(C\)\(i\)](#).

Student Common Application Form

Open-enrollment charter schools must use the [Common Charter Student Admission Application form](#). See [TEC, § 12.1173](#).

Equitable Recruitment

Open-enrollment charter schools must prohibit discrimination in their admission policies. See [20 U.S.C. 7221i](#) and [TEC, §12.111\(a\)\(5\)](#).

Charter schools that specialize in one or more performing arts may require an applicant to audition for admission to the school in addition to completing and submitting the common admission application form. See [TEC, §12.1171](#).

Charter schools may exclude a student who has engaged in conduct outlined in Section [37.006](#) related to placement in a disciplinary alternative education program or a juvenile justice alternative education program; has engaged in conduct outlined in Section [37.007](#) related to expulsion; or has been convicted of a criminal offense or has a juvenile court adjudication. See [TEC, §12.111\(a\)\(5\)\(A\)](#).

Enrollment Minimum

Pursuant to [19 TAC, §100.1017\(c\)\(1\)\(E\)](#) open-enrollment charter schools must commit to serving a minimum of 100 students at all times.

Enrollment Goals and Progress Indicators

An effective student recruitment strategy will designate progress indicators to measure progress towards meeting application and/or enrollment goals.

Evaluation Criteria

Community Engagement and Student Recruitment

Strong Responses:

- Identify a variety of data points and outreach strategies to support the belief that there is a demand for the proposed school.
- Present a plan that incorporates (1) timely and sustainable data-collection strategies, and (2) structured process(es) for responding and/or incorporating input.
- Outlines specific plans that allow for input from stakeholders on the implementation and operation of the proposed charter school.
- Outline a viable marketing and recruitment plan, including realistic strategies, timelines, responsible parties, costs, and any outreach to low-income families, emergent bilingual students, students with disabilities, or other groups at risk of academic under-achievement or attainment.
- Presents viable recruitment and marketing costs (in relation to) the proposed enrollment in Year 1.
- Provide, in the Admission and Enrollment Policy, a draft of the school's admission and enrollment policy that includes: (1) tentative start and end dates for the application window and the enrollment period; (2) enrollment deadlines and procedures; (3) policies and procedures for student waiting lists and lotteries; (4) policies and procedures for withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers; and (5) an explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents.
- Present, in the Admission and Enrollment Policy, (1) an application period and application process that clearly supports fair and equitable opportunity for all students; (2) a fair and equitable selection process in the event of oversubscription; (3) alignment with admission and enrollment requirements described in Texas statutes and rules; and (4) a non-discrimination statement that meets the requirements of TEC, §12.111(a)(5).

TERMINOLOGY, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

- (*New Operators ONLY*) Outline a clear plan to keep on track towards admission and enrollment goals and realistic steps to realign progress or revise goals, while still maintaining viable enrollment targets for Year 1.

OPERATIONS AND FINANCE:

School Schedule and Transportation

Instructional Minutes Requirements

For funding purposes, charter schools must now offer 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess) excepting any minutes waived by the TEA in writing.

Daily and Weekly Schedules

For curriculum purposes, there are no state requirements for instructional time. This is locally established. However, schools must ensure that “sufficient time is provided for teachers to teach and students to learn” all of the TEKS for a subject or course. See [19 TAC, §§74.1-74.3](#). A variety of flexible instructional arrangements and settings are permitted.

Student Attendance

State law requires every Texas school district to adopt an attendance accounting system that includes procedures to ensure the accurate recording and reporting of student attendance data. The [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook \(SAAH\)](#) contains the official attendance accounting requirements that all public school districts and open enrollment charter schools in Texas must meet.

Among other things, the SAAH describes the [Foundation School Program](#) (FSP) funding eligibility requirements for all students and the responsibilities of all district personnel involved in student attendance accounting.

Additional Days School Year

[The Additional Days School Year](#) adds half-day formula funding for traditional school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that want to add up to 30 instructional days to any of their elementary schools (grades PK–5). Districts and charter schools are eligible after they reach 180 instructional days and meet the minimum 75,600 minutes requirement.

Transportation

Required Transportation

A charter school is required to provide transportation for (1) certain students receiving special education who would be unable to attend classes without transportation services outlined in their IEP and (2) certain students eligible under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act who would be unable to attend classes without special transportation services. See [TEC §12.109](#) and [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, CFR §300.34\(a\) and \(c\)\(16\)](#)

Transportation Funding

School transportation funding, known as the transportation allotment, is part of the overall [Foundation School Program](#) (FSP) funding. Applicants should review the [Transportation Allotment Handbook](#) for important information about transportation services and funding.

Evaluation Criteria

School Schedule and Transportation

Strong Responses:

- In the Annual Calendar and School Schedule, present an annual school calendar that meets or exceeds state requirements (at least 75,600 minutes of instruction OR 43,300 minutes for Residential Facilities) and aligns with the overall proposal, including the instructional model and time for professional development.
- In the Annual Calendar and School Schedule, present clear examples of daily and weekly schedules that provide sufficient time for teachers to teach and students to learn all of the TEKS for a subject or course.
- Presents an appropriate and viable plan to meet the transportation needs of the anticipated students. If not providing transportation, presents a clear plan for ensuring the school is accessible to all interested families.
- Present a detailed plan for providing transportation to students whose IEP or 504 plan requires it.
- Present transportation costs and financing arrangements that align with the Financial Plan Workbook and that are fiscally viable.

OPERATIONS AND FINANCE:

Financial Plan

Financial Accounting Software

Applicants must select financial accounting software that complies with the requirements discussed in the Special Supplement—Charter Schools (view the Financial Accounting System and Resource Guide [module 2](#)).

Funding Resources

School funding is crucial to the viability of a charter school. Applicants should thoroughly review the following resources:

- The [Foundation School Program \(FSP\)](#) and [Charter School Finance](#).
- [Financial Accountability System Resource Guide](#) (FASRG), which describes the rules of financial accounting for charter schools (particularly module 10, the special supplement for charter schools).
- [Annual Financial and Compliance Reports](#).
- Charter Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas ([Charter FIRST](#)).

Additional Resources

Applicants should disclose any vendors they plan to hire in the financial plan workbook.

Statutory Requirements

Charter schools must ensure that they follow all statutory requirements. Applicants are encouraged to review the following requirements before submitting an application.

Texas Education Code

- §12.111(a)(10-11): Requirements to adopt an annual budget and conduct an annual audit
- §39.083: Reporting (related to Annual Financial Compliance Reports)
- §44.008: Fiscal Management (related to Annual Financial Compliance Reports)

Texas Administrative Code

- 19 TAC, §109.23: Independent Audits and Agreed-Upon Procedures (related to Annual Financial Compliance Reports)

Evaluation Criteria

Financial Plan

Strong Responses:

- In the (Attachment) Budget Narrative, present a detailed, realistic, and viable budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions.
- In the (Attachment) Budget Narrative, present a viable contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
- In the Financial Plan Workbook, present a viable budget that will support the proposed programs, including services for students with disabilities, emergent bilingual students, and gifted and talented students.
- Outline sound systems, policies and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how the financial team will establish and maintain strong internal controls, ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, and conduct independent annual financial and administrative audits.
- Differentiate the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finances.
- Provide a plan that will likely align the school's financial management practices with the Charter Financial Integrity Rating System (FIRST).
- In the Audit Report, the charter demonstrates that the entity applying for the charter has liabilities that are less than 80% of its assets. (*if applicable*)

CHARTER SCHOOL PORTFOLIO (Experienced Operators ONLY)

Evaluation Criteria

Portfolio Overview

For all experienced operators, strong responses:

- Present clear discussion and reflection on both student performance and accountability from the last two years of available data.
- Identify a specific student group that has exhibited significant under-performance and clear systems of support/ interventions that were put into place to achieve stronger achievement.
- Identify specific challenges that have affected teacher retention and present a clear systemic approach to how they were (or are currently) addressed.
- Identify specific challenges that have affected performance among students with disabilities and present a clear systemic approach to how they were (or are currently) addressed.
- Provide robust plans to address area(s) of growth systemically and present clear campus supports where applicable.

For experienced operators that either operate a district-authorized charter campus in Texas with multiple years of academic performance data or are incorporated in the state of Texas but operate and/or manage at least one charter school or campus with multiple years of academic performance data outside of Texas, strong responses will also:

- Detail a convincing rationale for the organization's decision to pursue a Subchapter D Open-Enrollment Charter School in Texas.
- Discuss thoughtful preparation and organizational steps towards adding a local education agency or if relocating to Texas, operating within state charter school requirements.
- Provide a reasonable and specific discussion of any changes to the board structure **or** a reasonable and specific discussion as to why the current board structure is necessary for effective governance of the proposed school.
- Outline viable and realistic financial controls that reflect familiarity with fiscal best practice.

For experienced operators that are affiliated with a Charter Management Organization (CMO) with multiple years of academic performance data, strong responses will also:

- Provide a rationale that establishes strong alignment between the existing education model and (1) the needs of the targeted community; and (2) improved student outcomes.
- Provides a detailed rationale for the proposed compensation structure and associated costs.
- Present a viable method to monitor the growth of the CMO's portfolio to ensure that the CMO continues its obligations to the proposed school.

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- Demonstrates a clear process for how the CMO will be evaluated, including (1) frequency, (2) evaluation tool to be used, and (3) expected school-wide and student-achievement outcomes that the CMO must achieve.

Addendum

Full-Time Hybrid/Full-Time Virtual Campus

Full-Time Hybrid Campus

Full-Time Hybrid Campus means a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time hybrid program authorized under [TEC, Chapter 30B](#).

Full-Time Hybrid Program

Full-Time Hybrid Program means a full-time educational program offered by a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus in which:

- a student is in attendance in person for less than 90 percent of the minutes of instruction provided in a school year; and
- the instruction and content may be delivered synchronously or asynchronously over the Internet, in person, or through other means.

Full-Time Virtual Campus

Full-Time Virtual Campus means a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus at which at least 50 percent of the enrolled students are enrolled in a full-time virtual program authorized under [TEC, Chapter 30B](#).

Full-Time Virtual Program

Full-Time Virtual Program means a full-time educational program offered by a school district or open-enrollment charter school campus in which:

- a student is in attendance in person minimally or not at all; and
- the instruction and content are delivered synchronously or asynchronously primarily over the Internet.

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

Applicants are encouraged to review the resources provided by the [Cybersecurity Annex \(K-12\) Checklist](#) to evaluate your Emergency Operations Plan for mandates and best practices.

Whole-program Virtual Instruction Provider

Whole-program Virtual Instruction Provider means a private or third-party service that provides oversight and management of the virtual instruction services or otherwise provides a preponderance of those services for a full-time virtual or full-time hybrid campus or program.

Third-party provider offering educational services

Third-party provider offering educational services means a private or third-party service that

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provides support, services, or resources to assist with instructional delivery for a campus or program and may deliver specific educational services, including but not limited to instruction, curriculum, or learning platforms, to support or facilitate campus operations.

Evaluation Criteria

Academic Progress and Monitoring

Strong Responses:

- Clearly outlines the education program, detailing how curriculum, core instructional practices, digital tools, and assessment strategies will drive academic achievement in a virtual or hybrid model.
- Clearly describes the delivery method (synchronous online, asynchronous online, in-person, or other.)
- Details the teacher and student-facing systems that will be used to track progress and determine success within the virtual or hybrid learning model.
- Provides a specific plan in which assessment instruments will be administered in-person for students enrolled in a hybrid or virtual course.

Evaluation Criteria

Operations

Strong Responses:

- Provides a thorough plan to develop and distribute written information describing each hybrid or virtual course available for enrollment.
- Clearly describes the infrastructure required to support student success in virtual and hybrid instruction, including instructional technology, any increases in bandwidth or expanded wireless access, and any effective classroom design to accommodate learning environments.
- Demonstrates a comprehensive, organized, and accurate understanding of how infrastructure supports effective virtual/hybrid learning.

Evaluation Criteria

Staffing Plan

Strong Responses:

- Provides a comprehensive process to ensure staff receive appropriate professional development in hybrid or virtual instruction before they begin teaching online.
- Provides clear criteria and processes that will be used to determine that staff has sufficient previous experience.

Evaluation Criteria

Data Privacy and Cybersecurity

Strong Responses:

- Describes clear and proactive measures to ensure a safe learning environment for all students, both on campus and online.
- Identifies all roles and/or departments that will be responsible for data oversight and ensuring timely access to information.
- Describes the cybersecurity framework that will safeguard digital assets and personal information in online learning environments – including specific tools, protocols, and staff responsibilities related to (1) threat detection, (2) access control, and (3) incident response.

Evaluation Criteria

Third-Party Service Providers

Strong Responses:

- Clearly identifies services that will be provided.
- Provides a thoughtful reflection on the historical performance of the proposed virtual service provider and any applicable student outcomes.

Evaluation Criteria

Whole-Program Virtual Instruction Provider

Strong Responses:

- Clearly describes the identification and selection process for selecting the proposed whole program provider.
- Details all services to be provided. Describes all goods, instructional materials, and associated costs.
- Provides thoughtful reflection on the historical performance of the proposed educational service provider in virtual services and any applicable student outcomes.
- Describes the oversight and evaluation methods that the governing board will use to oversee the private or third-party provider. Includes the frequency, evaluation tool to be used, and expected student outcomes.
- Identifies the specific measures that would be taken if the whole program provider does not meet performance and/or student achievement outcome goals.
- Outlines a specific plan to operate the school in the event of termination of the management agreement.