

This page contains frequently asked questions about the charter application and associated process. All references to TEC, TAC, and TGC refer to the Texas Education Code (TEC), Texas Administrative Code (TAC), and Texas Government Code (TGC), respectively.

## ELIGIBILITY & ENTITY FORMATION

1. [Must applicants submitting as a Tax-Exempt 501\(c\)\(3\) Organization be filed in Texas?](#)

**Answer:** Entities who apply as a Tax-Exempt 501(c)(3) Organization must file Articles of Incorporation with the Texas Secretary of State. This requirement also extends to out-of-state applicants who wish to apply as an experienced operator.

2. [What application pathway does an out-of-state operator complete and submit?](#)

**Answer:** Out-of-State applicants who wish to apply with their network's performance data must establish a Tax-Exempt 501(c)(3) Organization in Texas and complete the experienced operator application pathway.

3. [What is the definition of an experienced operator?](#)

**Answer:** Experienced operators are eligible entities that (1) operate at least one charter school outside of Texas with multiple years of academic performance data, (2) are affiliated with an out-of-state Network with multiple years of academic performance data, or (3) operate a district-authorized charter campus in Texas with multiple years of academic performance data.

4. [Do experienced individuals or proven charter school models qualify for the Experienced Operator pathway?](#)

**Answer:** While some individuals have considerable charter school experience (or) will use a currently successful charter school model; eligibility for the experienced operator pathway is defined by the sponsoring entity.

5. [Is there a difference between the charter school's Articles of Incorporation and those of the Tax-Exempt 501\(c\)\(3\) Organization associated with the proposed charter?](#)

**Answer:** The sponsoring entity is in-fact the charter school holder. If awarded, the sponsoring entity does not create a subsidiary charter school board. Consequently, all state filing requirements for the sponsoring entity, including the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, should reflect board members/officers (and) policies of the charter school.

## APPLICATION REQUIRMENTS & FORMATTING

1. [Are Private or Independent Institutions of Higher Learning eligible to apply for a Subchapter D open-enrollment charter school?](#)

**Answer:** Private or independent institution of higher education are eligible to apply for a Subchapter D open-enrollment charter school if they are: private or independent college or universities that are

(a) organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act; (b) exempt from taxation under Article VIII, Section 2 of the Texas Constitution and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and (3) accredited by (i) the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; (ii) the liaison Committee on Medical Education; or (iii) the American Bar Association. (TEC 61.03(15))

2. **When must public meeting(s) occur? Before or after the application deadline?**

**Answer:** Applicants must hold at least one public meeting prior to the application submission deadline. However, applicants may host additional public meeting(s) before and after the application deadline.

3. **Does the Texas Open-Meetings Act (TOMA) apply to the Board before the contract is approved? For example, at the public meeting(s).**

**Answer:** Public notice requirements under TOMA become effective when a quorum of board members is present to discuss and(or) vote on charter school issues (*bylaws etc.*)

4. **What does TOMA consider to be an appropriate place to provide public notification? Is a website or Facebook (FB) page an appropriate listing?**

**Answer:** At minimum, a school district must post notice of each meeting on a bulletin board at a place convenient to the public in the central administrative office of the charter school district. A school website (or) FB page would be insufficient, by itself, to meet the notice requirements of TOMA.

5. **How does an applicant prove that Statement(s) of Impact were mailed and received? What if they say they never received it?**

**Answer:** All Statements of Impact must be sent via certified mail to (i) each Superintendent and President of the Board of Trustees of each traditional school district from which the proposed charter school intends to draw students; (ii) each member of the Texas Legislature who represents the geographic area(s) to be served by the proposed charter school; and each (iii) Texas State Board of Education member who represents the geographic area(s) to be served by the proposed charter school.

So long as the Statement of Impact is correctly addressed, the application requirement is met by either providing the (a) green receipt card; or (b) returned signature card.

6. **What is the required citation format for referencing non-original ideas?**

**Answer:** There are no strict citation guidelines for citing sources; however, a reasonable person must be able to readily identify the source, year, and author of the cited material. Returning applicants must cite all material that was used from prior application submissions.

7. **How do returning applicants cite prior submissions? What if the application team is the same?**

**Answer:** Each section of the Generation 25 application that borrows from a prior application submission must be cited; regardless of overlap between applicant teams on each application submission. A returning applicant should indicate which sections are borrowed in each applicable section. A blanket citation will not be accepted.

8. [Must prompts be restated on the Response page?](#)

**Answer:** Applicants are not required to restate prompts on the Response page(s).

9. [Can multiple districts be added to each line of the Geographic Boundary table?](#)

**Answer:** The Geographic Boundary table provides enough space to add multiple districts per line.

10. [What are the requirements for notifying individual State Board members and Legislators about public meetings? \*How much notice is required?\*](#)

**Answer:** Applicants must notify, via their government email, all individual members of the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Texas state legislature who represent the geographic area to be served by the proposed school. Applicants must include [charterapplication@tea.texas.gov](mailto:charterapplication@tea.texas.gov) in the CC line of the email.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to provide at least 10 working days to each applicable SBOE member and Legislative official.

11. [Graphics are not allowed in the application. Successful applicants last year included graphics in their application. \*What are the penalties for breaking rules?\*](#)

**Answer:** Graphics that are embedded within the application are not scored higher than applications that do not possess graphics. Information must be substantiated and scored through narrative and table response.

12. [What materials are sent with the Statement of Impact Form? \*Is the executive summary included?\*](#)

**Answer:** Applicants must include the (i) Statement of Impact [Cover Letter](#); (ii) Statement of Impact [Form](#); and the (iii) Application Coversheet - *pages 9-11 of the Responses and Attachments Document*

Applicants are not required to include the executive summary with the Statement of Impact.

13. [When must the public meeting\(s\) occur?](#)

**Answer:** At least one public meeting must be conducted prior to submitting a completed application. An entity may host more than one meeting both before and after the submission of a completed application.

14. [How is the Table of Contents completed?](#)

**Answer:** Applicants must complete the Table of Contents that it is included in the Responses and Attachments Document after all the responses are completed and any loose attachments are inserted into the document.

Once completed, the table of contents can be electronically modified (or hand-written) for the final submission.

15. [Must public meeting\(s\) be held in each effected district in the proposed geographic boundary?](#)

**Answer:** Applicants are required to host at least one public meeting within the proposed geographic boundary prior to submitting a completed application. The location of the meeting(s) is within the purview of the applicant and their community engagement planning.

The proposal of multiple campuses does not require a public meeting in each of the districts where the campuses will be located.

However, applicants should be thoughtful in their community engagement and public meeting(s). Planning only one meeting within a large geographic boundary would be questionable in terms of quality and fidelity of community engagement (and) community interests.

## ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

1. [How are multiple campuses in Year 1 reflected in the Enrollment Projections table?](#)

**Answer:** Applicants proposing multiple campuses in Year 1 may cite each campus within the data fields provided in the table.

As an example.

Grade Level	Projected Number of Students					At capacity
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
EE3						
PK 4						
K	Campus 1: 50 Campus 2: 150					
1	Campus 1: 75 Campus 2: 70					

2. [Are students in Residential Treatment Center \(RTC\) Facilities considered homeless?](#)

**Answer:** For purposes of student enrollment in the charter school, children who are placed in an RTC facility are considered residents of the facility.

3. [Under what circumstance\(s\) are student enrollment auditions allowed?](#)

**Answer:** The only circumstance where an open-enrollment charter school may require an audition is when the charter school specializes in one or more performing arts. This type of charter school may require an applicant to audition for admission to the school in addition to completing and submitting the common admission application form.

[See Texas Education Code Section 12.1171-Admission to Open-Enrollment Charter Schools Specializing in Performing Arts.](#)

4. [Is it permissible to define a geographic boundary by a zip code/city/town etc.?](#)

**Answer:** A primary boundary can be defined by counties, zip codes, cities, communities; however, any portion of that geographic area that is not within the corresponding traditional school district is not eligible to enroll.

Example. ABC charter proposes a primary and secondary geographic boundary. The primary boundary will be students of Castle ISD that reside in River Run County. Their secondary boundary will be all other students who reside within Castle ISD.

5. [What is the ideal size for a geographic boundary?](#)

**Answer:** Geographic boundaries should be a reasonable and realistic reflection of the proposed school's mission, vision, and plans for any long-term growth.

However, applicants should be thoughtful and prepared to justify an overly large geographic boundary; or the (ii) viability of an extremely small boundary.

6. [Do non-contiguous school districts form one collective geographic boundary? Or multiple geographic boundaries?](#)

**Answer:** Geographic boundaries are the total collection of traditional school district boundaries that define enrollment eligibility for a charter school. These districts do not have to be contiguous. Many charter operators are located in multiple cities, and consequently, possess non-contiguous traditional districts within their geographic boundary.

7. [What is ideal enrollment in order to remain viable in Year 1 \(and beyond\)?](#)

**Answer:** Enrollment projections that support financial viability funded solely with state funding are approximately 250 students. Viable enrollment will depend on the scope and cost of the proposed operations. However, at minimum, the Agency suggests no fewer than 150 students in Year 1.

8. [When are newly authorized charter schools eligible to expand their geographic boundaries? What if we meet our at-capacity sooner than expected?](#)

**Answer:** Charter schools are ineligible to request expansions until they are in their third year of operation.

An expansion amendment is an amendment that permits a charter school to: extend the grade levels it serves; add an additional campus; add an additional site; change its geographic boundaries; or increase its maximum allowable enrollment.

In the event a newly authorized charter school meets their capacity enrollment sooner than expected; that school must wait until they are eligible for an expansion amendment.

9. [Does the term At-Capacity refer to each district within the geographic boundary? Or is it a collective projection?](#)

**Answer:** At-Capacity enrollment refers to a collective charter-level projected enrollment.

Example. Sunrise Charter School proposes a maximum enrollment of 1,500 students at-capacity. They will operate three campuses in the Austin area. Their at-capacity projection of 1,500 students refers to the total enrollment across all three campuses.

10. [What is the definition of documented discipline history?](#)

**Answer:** Documented discipline history indicates a student was subject to a disciplinary action that resulted from an offense which has been documented as a disciplinary action reason code explaining the offense and reason for the disciplinary action. These include behaviors identified in Texas Education Code Sections 37.006 and 37.007 and any disciplinary actions that are reflected on a student's 425 Student - Disciplinary Action records.

11. [What is the base required enrollment at start-up?](#)

**Answer:** Although no minimum enrollment was referenced in the application, it is important to consider the financial viability of a school. The application allows applicants to provide for a scaling up of enrollment in the first years of operation; however, it is important to note that in order to be financially viable a charter school should aim to serve a minimum of 250 students.

12. [Must an applicant create multiple enrollment summary tables if they propose to open multiple campuses?](#)

**Answer:** The enrollment summary table is a local education agency (LEA) or district-level projection. This projection accounts for all campuses opened during the initial contract period (year 1-5).

## SCHOOL DESIGN

1. [Must the curriculum address all proposed grade levels?](#)

**Answer:** Curriculum must be discussed for all grades approved in the charter contract. However, New Operators must only include a sample course and sequence for one course in a core content area that will be taught during the school's first year.

2. [Are there samples of successful applications with highly rated curriculum and instruction sections?](#)

**Answer:** Applicants may view approved proposals on the Charter School Portfolio page [HERE](#).

3. [For applicants using the experienced operator application, if school performance is assessed by the state, but the authorizer is an LEA, should we submit the state assessment \(Attachment 7\)?](#)

**Answer:** Experienced operators should submit all relevant accountability ratings/assessment data from the appropriate authorizer (or) regulatory entity within that specific state that reflects the academic accountability of the charter and the students served at the charter.

# SPECIAL POPULATIONS

1. [Who administers the English Language Proficiency \(ELP\) test if a student speaks a language outside of staff expertise?](#)

**Answer:** For students who speak a language other than Spanish, a school would only administer the language proficiency test in English to consider if the student is fluent or not fluent.

# THE BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

1. [When does the public notice requirement under the Texas Open Meeting Act \(TOMA\) become effective?](#)

**Answer:** When a quorum of the sponsoring entity is present to take action related to the sponsoring entity, the Board must give the public notice of the date, time, place and subject of an upcoming meeting. The notice must be posted in a place readily accessible to the general public at least 72 hours before the meeting.

[See Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.](#)

2. [What is the difference between the Board of Directors and an Advisory Board?](#)

**Answer:** An advisory board is a volunteer group formed to give advice and support to a nonprofit's board of directors/governing board or executive staff. Unlike the board of directors/governing board, an advisory board doesn't have decision-making authority and can't issue directives that must be followed.

Rules regarding the duties of an Advisory Board are outlined in a sponsoring entity's Bylaws.

3. [Do all board members need to be registered with the Secretary of State?](#)

**Answer:** All Board members, for purposes of this application, should be registered members of the sponsoring entity.

4. [Can board members be paid? Governing Board and 2nd Board \(School Operation Board\)?](#)

**Answer:** Board members, including advisory members, are not eligible to receive compensation for their services. All board positions are unpaid.

5. [Can Board Members submit Financial Support Letters of any denomination if the charter application is approved?](#)

**Answer:** Board members may provide financial support in the form of Financial Support Letters. This cannot be a requirement of board membership.

6. [Must all Board members reside in Texas?](#)

**Answer:** A majority of the governing body of an open-enrollment charter holder must be qualified voters.

To be eligible to register to vote in Texas, a person must be: (1) a United States citizen; (2) a resident of the Texas county in which application for registration is made; (3) not finally convicted of a felony; and (4) not determined by a final judgement of a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote.

7. *May a Board member resign and accept a position of employment with the charter school? How early in the application process is this permissible?*

**Answer:** Any changes in the Board that occur prior to submission are within the purview of the applicant. The Board that is presented in the final application are presumed to be individuals chosen to execute the proposal with fidelity over the course of the charter school's foreseeable life cycle.

However, barring any nepotism restrictions; a member of the Board may take a paid position with the school after formally stepping down from their seat on the Board and applying for a position with the charter school. Any applicable Board members must answer 'yes' in the Board Member Biographical Affidavit- Question 9.

The Agency will question the motives and sincerity of the applicant if a significant number of Board members have plans/or in-fact resign for employment opportunities with the charter school.

8. *When must Board members complete a background check? Before application submission or if/when approved?*

**Answer:** It is the responsibility of the sponsoring entity to ensure the proposed Board members, beginning at the time of application submission, meet the requirements for service on a Texas charter school board.

9. *Can an assistant superintendent from an ISD be on your charter board?*

**Answer:** There is no prohibition preventing an employee of an independent school district or a member of the independent school district's board of trustees from serving on the charter school governing board.

10. *What is the hiring structure of an open-enrollment school?*

**Answer:** The Board (aka the charter school governing board) is tasked with hiring the Superintendent, who in turn, will hire school staff. The superintendent is not a member of the charter school board.

## TALENT MANAGEMENT

1. *What are the duties of the Superintendent/Chief Operations Officer? How are they different from a Principal?*

**Answer:** The Superintendent is charged with the duties of, or acting as, a chief operating officer, director, or assistant director of a charter holder or charter school, including one or more of the following functions:



(A) assuming administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision, or evaluation of the education programs, services, or facilities of a charter holder or charter school, or for appraising the performance of the charter holder's or charter school's staff; (B) assuming administrative authority or responsibility for the assignment or evaluation of any of the personnel of the charter holder or charter school, including those employed by a management company; (C) making recommendations to the governing body of the charter holder or the charter school regarding the selection of personnel of the charter holder or charter school, including those employed by a management company; (D) recommending the termination, non-renewal, or suspension of an employee or officer of the charter holder or charter school, including those employed by a management company; or recommending the termination, non-renewal, suspension, or other action affecting a management contract; (E) managing the day-to-day operations of the charter holder or charter school as its administrative manager; (F) preparing or submitting a proposed budget to the governing body of the charter holder or charter school (except for developing budgets for a charter school campus, if this is a function performed by a campus administration officer under the terms of the open-enrollment charter); (G) preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the governing body of the charter holder or charter school, or overseeing the implementation of adopted policies, except for legal services provided by an attorney licensed to practice law in this state or public accountancy services provided by a certified public accountant licensed to practice public accountancy services in this state; (H) developing or causing to be developed appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the governing body of the charter holder or charter school, except for legal services provided by an attorney licensed to practice law in this state or public accountancy services provided by a certified public accountant licensed to practice public accountancy services in this state; (I) providing leadership for the attainment of student performance in a charter school operated by the charter holder, based on the indicators adopted under TEC, §39.053 and §39.054, or other indicators adopted by the charter holder in its open-enrollment charter; or (J) organizing the central administration of the charter holder or charter school.

[See Texas Administrative Code Texas Administrative Code, Section 100.001](#)

2. [May the same individual serve as both Superintendent and Principal?](#)

**Answer:** The Superintendent may facilitate roles associated with a campus principal.

3. [What are the certification and educational requirements for superintendents and teachers?](#)

**Answer:** Superintendents and principals of open-enrollment charter schools are not required to meet certification standards applicable to their traditional ISD counterparts.

All teachers and principals at open-enrollment charter schools must have at least a baccalaureate degree. However, they are not required to hold state certifications unless they are an (1) early childhood education, (2) special education, or (3) bilingual education/ESL teacher. These teachers must have the appropriate state certification (and additional qualifications for early childhood education).

4. [Should Experienced Operators include centralized roles in the Staffing Chart-Attachment 23 and Supplemental Human Resource Forms- Attachment 24? Or are they intended to be school-based staff only?](#)

**Answer:** Experienced operators should provide a full representation of all roles associated with the charter school and its operations; this should include all school-based staff including central office administrators.

## OPERATIONS & CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

1. [What is a Management Company? What services are they able to provide?](#)

**Answer:** A management company is a natural person or a corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, association, agency, or other legal entity that provides any management services to a charter holder or charter school.

A management company may offer the following services: (A) planning, operating, supervising, or evaluating a charter school's educational programs, services, or facilities; (B) making recommendations to the governing body of a charter holder or charter school relating to the selection of school personnel; (C) managing a charter school's day-to-day operations as its administrative manager; (D) preparing a proposed budget or submitting it to the governing body of a charter holder or charter school; (E) recommending policies to be adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school, except that legal services provided by an attorney licensed to practice law in this state, and public accountancy services provided by a certified public accountant licensed to practice public accountancy services in this state, are not management services, notwithstanding that such services may include recommending policies to be adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school; (F) developing procedures or practices to implement policies adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school, except that legal services by an attorney licensed to practice law in this state, and public accountancy services provided by a certified public accountant licensed to practice public accountancy services in this state, are not management services, notwithstanding that such services may include developing procedures or practices to implement policies adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school; (G) overseeing the implementation of policies adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school; or (H) providing leadership for the attainment of student performance at a charter school based on the indicators adopted under TEC, §39.053 and §39.054, or adopted by the governing body of a charter holder or charter school.

[See Texas Administrative Code Texas Administrative Code, Section 100.001](#)

2. [Must charter schools provide storm shelters for students and staff?](#)

**Answer:** The state of Texas does not regulate municipal building codes. There may be instances where municipalities pass ordinances that would necessitate specific building features. However, the

applicant has the responsibility to inquire with those municipalities regarding facility requirements that may affect their proposal.

3. **Do transportation requirements for certain Individual Education Programs (IEP) then extend to the general student population?**

**Answer:** Charter schools are not required to provide transportation except in the case of a student's IEP. If transportation is required by a student's IEP; transportation is only required for that specific student.

4. **May Generation 25 charter school awardees open earlier than August 2021?**

**Answer:** As outlined in the application all Generation 25 charter school awardees will begin serving students during the Fall semester of 2021. There are no provisions for early openings; however, a one-year delayed opening(s) is permissible but must be formally requested and approved by the commissioner of education. Foreseeable delays should be calculated in an applicant's decision to submit a Generation 25 Application for Open-Enrollment Charter School.

5. **What PEIMS resources are available to open-enrollment charter schools?**

**Answer:** Once awarded, the agency will provide PEIMS training and supports in the first year of operations. The Education Service Centers (ESC) are also a valuable resource tool for charter school operators, including PEIMS training.

6. **May charter schools give student's vacation days for have religious holidays?**

**Answer:** Public schools in Texas may provide school holidays for secular purposes- such as a winter-break, spring-break, or other district holiday's that may fall around traditionally religious holidays.

7. **Must an open-enrollment charter school offer 75,600 minutes? Does it include lunch and recess?**

**Answer:** Districts and charter schools are required to provide instruction of at least 4 hours a day in order for a student to be considered full-time. Districts must operate each campus for a minimum of 75,600 minutes per school year. The change to minutes was to provide districts and charter schools more flexibility when scheduling and planning. For example, they could build a longer school day—in minutes—but shift to a smaller number of total school days. Additionally, if the public school district or charter school experiences inclement weather and has to close school for any number of days, the district or charter school can extend the school day by a corresponding number of minutes for the remainder of the school year to make up for the time away.

These requirements were established with the passage of House Bill 2610 and first implemented during the 2016-17 school year.

For more information on HB 2610:

[https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/House\\_Bill\\_2610FAQv\\_6.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/House_Bill_2610FAQv_6.pdf)

8. What certifications are acceptable for English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers?

**Answer:** The only way a teacher may be ESL certified in an open-enrollment charter school is if that teacher is grade-level and content certified in the ESL Supplemental exam.

## FACILITIES

1. If we don't have capacity in our current facility even though our maximum enrollment is larger - do we have to take any student that applies to our charter?

**Answer:** A charter school stipulates how many seat(s) per grade level are available for the school year. This decision is a local decision, often impacted by many factors, including but not limited to, staff, number of classrooms, and local building and occupancy codes. However, so long as enrollment (per grade level) has not been filled, a charter school may not turn away eligible students.

2. In the absence of a final design for the campus, should experienced operators provide general plans from campuses in other regions as examples?

**Answer:** Should general campus plans from within the experienced operator's network be available and if it is the intent for the affiliated entity to use such plans, they should be submitted.

## FINANCE

1. Is the sponsoring entity required to have *funds-on-hand* prior to submitting an application?

**Answer:** A sponsoring entity is not required to have cash-on-hand prior to submitting an application. However, an application is assessed and scored on the strength of its budget including the sponsoring entity's current fund balance.

2. What is per-pupil funding?

**Answer:** Charter schools receive funding based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA). This weighted calculation is determined by the number and type of students attending school on an average day.

3. Why is it important to budget with a daily attendance rate of 80%? What happens if you estimate 80% and 100% attend?

**Answer:** Charter schools often have lower than anticipated attendance rates in the first five years of operation. Budgeting conservatively allows for the new operators some flexibility to the enrollment projections without being detrimental to fiscal operations. A reasonable planning estimate of \$5,920 per student, which accounts for a daily attendance rate of 80%, should be used when planning and developing the budget.

Funding for newly authorized charter schools is based on these projections for their initial or first year calculations. Funding is then adjusted to reflect actual student attendance for the remainder of the school year based on attendance submission. In the event that attendance is higher than

projected, the Agency would increase funding; and inversely, would decrease funds where attendance is lower than anticipated.

4. *Are state funds provided during the start-up year? Are schools required to pay all costs up front?*

**Answer:** Newly approved charter operators begin to receive state funding during their first of serving students, referenced as Year 1. There are no state funding opportunities for the start-up year.

Consequently, a newly authorized charter operator must take appropriate measures to remain independently viable until at least six weeks into the first semester of operations. These funding streams can be, but are not limited to, philanthropic contributions, secured lines of credit, fundraising, grants etc.

5. *Have the latest HB3 formulas been included in the financial workbook?*

**Answer:** The HB3 formulas have not been included in the Generation 25 Financial Plan Workbook. Applicants must use projections included within this current application cycle. Early education can be shown in the Enrollment tab under Student Population – Number enrolled in early childhood; Small School Allotment and Dyslexia are not specifically listed under Student population; however, they can be reported under other line items with a narrative explanation in the Financial plan.

6. *Which paid services must be included?*

**Answer:** Applicants must describe all costs anticipated during the start-up year including all contracted services.

7. *How do applicants qualify for additional summer funding? Does it start during the summer preceding Year 1?*

**Answer:** Charter schools that operate on a schedule of 180 days and 75,600 minutes are eligible to receive 30 days of additional summer funding to serve students. This funding opportunity is not available during the start-up year.

8. *How are multiple campuses in Year 1 reflected in the financial plan workbook?*

**Answer:** The budget narrative should describe that the amounts are for two campuses and breakdown in the narrative the amounts that apply to each campus separately. The applicant should also use the notes or description for each line item in the Excel workbook to document that the total amount entered is for campus 1 and campus 2.

9. *How are Pre-K students counted in the financial plan workbook if they will be classified as bi-lingual, compensatory education, or other special populations? Do they count as 0.5 enrollment or 1?*

**Answer:** Pre-K students who qualify under any of these sub-populations should be counted as 1 in the financial plan workbook.

# ASSEMBLY AND SUBMISSION

1. [Can applications be hand-delivered before the submission date?](#)

**Answer:** The Agency will not accept early hand-delivered submissions. A failure to adhere to this policy will result in disqualification for the current application cycle.

2. [Can applications be mailed before the submission date?](#)

**Answer:** Applications may be mailed to the Texas Education Agency- Division of Charter School Administration [Care of John Garland] 1701 North Congress Avenue, Austin TX 78701 prior to January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Please note, the date of submission is “upon receipt” and not “date of dispatch.” Any applications that are not received by January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 5 p.m. CST will not be eligible for review.

3. [Can an application be modified \(and resubmitted\) if it is submitted before the official deadline?](#)

**Answer:** An application is received in its final-form and not eligible for subsequent modification and resubmission.

4. [Is there a file size limit on the digital uploads?](#)

**Answer:** There are no foreseeable file size limitations. Sharefile is equipped to hand all digital uploads of the application, including attachments and addendums.

# REVIEW AND SCORING

1. [What training is required of external evaluators? How do you ensure their personal biases do not affect their scores?](#)

**Answer:** External reviewers are chosen by a selective and rigorous application process. Readers are expressly told to refrain from personal biases throughout their duties. However, external reviewers bring extensive experience with charter school administration; and thus, are expected to incorporate that experience to their review and scoring.

2. [What are the specific qualifications of those selected as external reviewers?](#)

**Answer:** Reviewers are chosen from an open Request for Qualification (RFQ 701-20-005). All prospective reviewers are expected to have the knowledge and skills associated with curriculum development, instructional materials, educational service and delivery, charter school organization and management, facilities use and management, pedagogy, innovative education programs or technologies, assessments, diverse learning populations, school leadership, human resources, school finance, and/or charter school governance and policy.

3. [How are applications assigned to external evaluators? Are returning applications assigned to the same external reviewers?](#)

**Answer:** To the extent possible, applications are assigned at random and returning applications are not assigned to the same external reviewers.

4. [Who may participate in the capacity interview?](#)

**Answer:** Capacity interviews will be held during the week of July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Anyone from the public may attend, including stakeholders, parents, and applicant team members. At a minimum, all members of the Board are expected to field questions from TEA staff. However, other members from the application team are welcomed (and may be requested) to participate in the capacity interview.

5. [How is the number of approved applications determined? Is there a specific number of new charters that are slotted and funded?](#)

**Answer:** There is no limit to the number of charter proposals that are approved during any given application cycle. However, TEC Section 12.101(b-2) establishes a total charter school cap at 305. This means that the State of Texas cannot have a charter school portfolio greater than 305 schools at any given time.