2019-20

Reviewer Kit for Charter School Applications

Cleveland Metropolitan School District

1111 Superior Avenue Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Application issued:	**May 10, 2019**
Optional Information Session:	**July 2019**
Intent to Apply Due:	**August 1, 2019**
Application Due:	**August 31, 2019**
Interviews:	**October 2019**
Decisions Made:	**November 2019**

CMSD Sponsorship Application Reviewer Kit: 2019-20

Notes:

- **Each reviewer shall individually score and document his or her rating for each selection criterion.**

- **To be approved, an application must:**

    1. **Satisfy the requirements of the following sections: 1, 4, 5, 16, and 23;**
    2. **Score 3 or more points on the following sections: 6, 11, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, and, as may be applicable to the type of application, 7 and 9;**
    3. **Score 6 or more points on the following sections: 12, 14, 19, and, if the application is for a replication school, 8; and**
    4. **Earn a minimum score equal to 75 percent of the total points possible for that type of application (new school, replication school, sponsor transfer) on sections for which numerical scores are assigned.**

Criteria for Section 1 – Applicant Information

Reviewers will look for background information that:

- Is presented accurately and truthfully; and
- Answers all the required questions

Section 1 Scoring: Complete and accurate (Pass), Incomplete and/or inaccurate (Fail)

Criteria for Section 2 – Executive Summary

Reviewers will look for an Executive Summary that:

- For a new school, persuasively describes a need for the proposed model in the neighborhood desired;
- For an existing school proposing to change sponsors to CMSD, persuasively explains how the school addresses a need in the neighborhood it serves;
- Presents a coherent argument as to why the proposed program is likely to meet the needs of students and improve student learning; and
- Effectively summarizes how the academic, organizational, governance, and financial designs will support the success of the school.

Section 2 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (1), Meets Criteria (2)

Criteria for Section 3 – Student Enrollment Plan and Rationale

Reviewers will look for an enrollment plan and rationale that:

- Align with the school's stated mission;
- Promote continuity of educational experience;
- Contribute to attracting and retaining students for a sustained number of years; and
- Are reasonable and address any possible attrition.

   Section 3 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4)

Criteria for Section 4 – Simultaneous Submissions to Another Sponsoring Entity

Note: There are no defined criteria for this response other than to fully explain the status of any simultaneous or prior submissions of the same community application.

   Section 4 Scoring: Fully explained, with required documentation (Pass), Not fully explained and/or lacking required documentation (Fail)

Criteria for Section 5 – Sponsor Status of Other Schools in Model

Note: There are no defined criteria for this response other than to fully explain the sponsor and contractual status of other schools in the model.

   Section 5 Scoring: Fully disclosed and explained (Pass), Not fully disclosed and/or fully explained (Fail)

Criteria for Section 6 – Affiliated Organization Information

Reviewers will look for a response that indicates a thoughtful and detailed partnership relationship wherein the school's governing authority will hold the affiliated organization accountable for increased student achievement results and—specifically— is empowered, both formally and also plausibly as a practical matter, to take action to sever the affiliation if the governing authority determines that it is not beneficial to continue the affiliation.

   Section 6 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 7 – Capacity to Replicate

Reviewers will look for a response that shows:

- A thoughtful short- and long-term replication plan;
- Thoughtful research and analysis underpinning how this application fits into the larger plans for the school model and the operator;
- A compelling argument that replication of the school model will be successful; and
- An honest and realistic appraisal of the status of schools in the school model the applicant proposes to replicate.

Section 7 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3)
Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 8 – Performance Rationale for Replication

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Provides complete data for all schools and all available years in the required format;
- Provides evidence of sound governance of other schools managed by the network and/or following the same model;
- Provides evidence of sound financial management of other schools in the network and/or following the same model;
- Provides a thoughtful reflection on performance results and trends in all requested areas, and how these trends can speak to future performance at the proposed school;
- Explains differences in performance within the same academic model/ framework;
- Considers how prior attempts at model expansion have performed relative to more mature model/network schools;
- Reflects a record of compliance, and/or acknowledges any past compliance issues and explains their resolution, in a way that inspires confidence that similar issues, if any, will be avoided for the proposed school;
- Identifies how potential challenges could impair performance at the proposed school and includes plans to overcome such challenges; and
- Is not outweighed by considerations that come to light as a result of the interviewing of current and/or past sponsors and past compliance reports.

Section 8 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (4), Meets Criteria (6)
Exceeds Criteria (8) – Note: minimum score of 6 required

Criteria Section 9 – Rationale for Transferring Sponsorship to CMSD

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Provides a satisfactory rationale for switching sponsors;
- Provides complete data for all available years in the required format;
- Provides evidence of sound governance of the school;
- Provides evidence of sound financial management of the school;
- Provides a thoughtful reflection on performance results and trends in all requested areas, and how these results and trends can speak to future performance at the proposed school;
- Reflects a record of compliance, and/or acknowledges any past compliance issues and explains their resolution, in a way that inspires confidence that similar issues will be avoided for the school after the transfer of its sponsorship to CMSD;
- Identifies how potential challenges could impair performance at the school and includes plans to overcome such challenges; and
- Is not outweighed by considerations that come to light as a result of the interview of current and/or past sponsors and past compliance reports.

Section 9 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 10 – School Calendar and Daily/Weekly Schedule

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Shows a school year, school day, and overall calendar that comply with state law;
- Supports the school's stated mission and convincingly addresses and supports strong academic performance for all students anticipated to be served by the school, and
- Provides for the staffing, activities, and programs identified in the application.

Section 10 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4)

Criteria for Section 11 – Academic Program

Reviewers will look for an enrollment plan and rationale that:

- Effectively describe the school's mission, vision, and education philosophy;
- Provide specific and detailed information as to why the school design is likely to result in high student achievement; and
- Connect the design of the proposed school to the needs of the community it intends

to serve.

Criteria Section 12 – School Academic, Organizational, and Financial Goals

Reviewers will look for goals that:

- Do not duplicate goals within CMSD's performance framework;
- Include indicators, measures, metrics, and targets, as defined in this Application Kit;
- Convey a genuine commitment to accountability for results;
- Provide evidence of how these goals are attainable and how the school possesses or is likely to possess applicant has the competence to achieve those results;
- Are clear, measurable, and data-driven; and
- Are consistent with mission and program of the applicant school.

Criteria Section 13- Professional Development

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Is linked to the mission of the school as well as state curricular and assessment demands;
- Provides details necessary to determine that the school has earmarked sufficient resources to support the program;
- Reflects the ongoing support and training for novice teachers;
- Is linked to student academic needs, not adult interests;
- Is evaluated regularly and systematically to determine its effectiveness;
- Indicates strong alignment between the culture the school provides or proposes to create and the academic results demanded by CMSD; and
- Includes specific strategies, staffing structures, and supports to ensure that students with disabilities will succeed as do students as a whole at the proposed school.

Criteria Section 14 - Racial and Socioeconomic Diversity

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Reflects sound analysis, research, and/or reasoning as to the school's current or expected enrollment composition;
- Reflects thoughtful consideration of, and an understanding of, likely or actual educational challenges and equity considerations that may be associated with the actual and/or anticipated enrollment composition; and
- Provides credible plans for meeting these challenges and addressing these considerations.

Section 14 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (4), Meets Criteria (6) Exceeds Criteria (8) – Note: minimum score of 6 required

Criteria Section 15 – Special Student Populations

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Provides assurance of a strong understanding of special student population needs and requirements under state and federal law;
- Is detailed, going beyond boilerplate policy or compliance language, to provide detail how the applicant's program will meets the needs of special student populations; and
- Presents an honest assessment, if the school or proposed school is part of a school model, of that school model's past record and current ability to meet the needs of special student populations and explains how any past or current concerns will be addressed by the proposed school.

Section 15 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 16 – High School Graduation Requirements

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Adheres to the state's graduation requirements; and
- Includes requirements for diploma and honors diploma.

Section 16 Scoring: Complete (Pass), Incomplete (Fail)

Criteria Section 17 – Business Plan, Organizational Chart, and Staffing Plan

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Sets forth business goals for the first five years of the school's operation, or for an existing school, the next five years, that are clear and relate to the academic, financial, and operational position of the school during that time period;
- Uses data to explains convincingly why the applicant believes the business plan goals are attainable;
- Addresses recruitment, selection, training, and retention of individuals for specific roles and, in assigning job functions, considers need, capacity, and financial and human resources;
- Provides a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school;
- Demonstrates understanding of management needs and priorities;
- Has a staffing and leadership structure designed to successfully implement the proposed school design; and
- Has a staffing plan that appears viable and adequate for effective implementation of the proposed educational program.

Section 17 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 18 – School Leadership

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Indicates the applicant groups has identified key elements necessary for strong school leadership;
- Demonstrates a link between the attributes of leadership sought by the school and the program described in the application; and
- For a new school, conveys a likelihood that the attributes of school leadership and the leadership structure will assist the school in avoiding challenges related to school start-up.

Section 18 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 19 - Parent and Community Engagement

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Demonstrates applicant understanding of the goals of the Cleveland Plan and existing analyses that document the need for additional high-performance seats in the neighborhood selected;
- Shows strong evidence of parent demand for the school;
- Provides evidence of community support that supports claims made in the application; and
- Indicates parent and community support that will directly benefit the school's ability to meet its academic, organizational, and financial goals.

Section 19 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (4), Meets Criteria (6) Exceeds Criteria (8) – Note: minimum score of 6 required

Criteria Section 20 – Governing Authority

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Includes a completed disclosure form (see Appendix E) for each current governing authority member or expected prospective member, along with a resume, bio, or curriculum vitae;
- Indicates the members serving or intending to serve on the governing authority have a balanced mix of skills and knowledge including, but not limited to, knowledge of academically successful schools, data analysis, non-profit governance, education and other municipal law, finance, real estate, etc.; and
- Demonstrates that the governing authority has or will have the expertise and capacity to perform its legal responsibilities and oversee successful execution of the plans for the school.

Section 20 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 21 – Budget and Budget Narrative

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Presents budget priorities that are consistent with and support key parts of the plan, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility;
- Presents realistic, evidence-based revenue and expenditure assumptions, including for any plan to incur and repay debt;

- Presents viable strategies for meeting potential budget and cash flow challenges, particularly for the first year of operation; and
- Demonstrates a commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school.

Section 21 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 22 – Fiscal Soundness

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Provides sound fiscal policies and procedures that comport with the requirements of Ohio law and rules;
- Is characterized by sound, strong internal controls;
- Is feasible given the staffing structure provided; and
- Includes a strong description as to how the governing authority and school finance personnel will monitor their effectiveness of the policies, procedures, internal controls, and staffing structure.

Section 22 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 23 – Insurance

Reviewers will look for a response that completely addresses the identified requirements and indicates the governing authority's diligence in working to protect the school.

Section 23 Scoring: Completely addresses requirements and indicates sufficient diligence (Pass), Does not completely address requirements and/or indicate sufficient diligence (Fail)

Criteria Section 24 – Facilities

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Indicates sound management, or in the case of a new school a sound understanding, of the facilities required to support the proposed school program;
- Reflects an understanding of facilities acquisition costs, leasehold improvement costs, and operating costs;
- Reflects the current or proposed governing authority's understanding of facilities acquisition challenges; and

- Indicates that the current proposed governing authority has, or has access to, the expertise and knowledge necessary to secure and maintain a quality facility.

Section 24 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required

Criteria Section 25 – Timeline

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Indicates a thoughtful approach to the setup of the organizational, financial, and academic steps it takes to ready a school to welcome children;
- Outlines a well-timed plan for student recruitment and enrollment of students; and
- Lists activities scheduled in order to meet the timing required for the CMSD Opening Assurance visit, which must be complete no later than 10 days prior to the opening of school.

Section 25 Scoring: Does Not Meet (0), Approaches Criteria (2), Meets Criteria (3) Exceeds Criteria (4) – Note: minimum score of 3 required