

Jefferson Parish Schools

Charter School Application

Additional Questions

for the

2020 Application Cycle



This document contains the Jefferson Parish Schools Additional Questions to accompany the 2020 Louisiana Charter Application.

The applicant's response to the JPS Additional Questions should include only the information requested below, saved in a single PDF file. Please clearly label each section of your response with headings that match the headings of the JPS Additional Questions Sections and Appendices.

Additional Questions responses should be no more than 20 pages, excluding the requested Appendices, which should be no more than 75 pages.

Applications that do not include completed documents may not be reviewed for approval.

COMMUNITY AND STUDENTS TO BE SERVED

General Overview: The characteristics and demographics of the community to be served are essential factors that inform the design of a successful charter school, ultimately driving support for student enrollment and community involvement in the school. At a minimum, applicants must demonstrate knowledge of the JPS school district, which the school will be located and from which it will draw students. Applicants may also highlight narrower communities or neighborhoods within a JPS or discuss plans for drawing students from across multiple attendance zones. Likewise, the academic program must reflect the needs of the specific target student population to be served.

Successful charter schools are typically embedded in their community and leverage community assets to help start and sustain the school. Community support may involve student recruitment, the academic program, professional development, facility assistance, fundraising or any other aspect of the school design. Applicant groups should cultivate community support and provide evidence of specific commitments in their charter application.

1. Describe the community to be served by the proposed school.
2. Describe the educational options in the community, including the number, type and academic performance of local public and private schools.
3. Describe the target student population to be served within the proposed school community, including the anticipated percentages of students with disabilities, Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners, and economically disadvantaged students.
4. Describe the needs of the community that will be met by the proposed school.
5. Explain the rationale for selecting the school community and target population.
6. Explain how this school will enhance or expand educational options, including whether the educational program or innovative methods to be used by the proposed school differ from the district from which the charter school is expected to enroll students.
7. Provide an assessment of the depth and commitment of community support and/or opposition within the proposed attendance zone for the proposed school. Explain how community assets will be leveraged and any challenges presented by opposition will be overcome.

Attachments:

- **Evidence of Community Support (Appendix C);** Provide letters of support or other evidence of community support for the proposed school. Support must reflect the specific proposed school and should not be merely support for charter schools or education reform in general.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

General Overview: All applications should rigorously demonstrate that the applicant has conducted public outreach, in conformity with a thorough and meaningful public review process. Applicants should record and present evidence of their attempts to engage with each of the following groups:

- 1. Students, families, and community members;**
- 2. Existing district and charter schools;**
- 3. Community based organizations and companies; and**
- 4. Elected or appointed officials.**

The public review process should include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- 1. Informing the community about the proposed charter school, including the intended location, the target student population, the grades to be served, and a description of the educational program(s) to be offered.** This should include reasonable notice to stakeholders in the community, and may be achieved through several means, including but not limited to: community letters and flyers, news and/or web articles, advertisements, community meetings, meetings with stakeholders, and other means employed by the applicant;
- 2. Providing stakeholders in the community the opportunity to submit comment on the proposed charter school.** This may be achieved through the means listed above, the provision of an email or website for comment submission, as well as other means employed by the applicant;
- 3. At least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located.** Reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders; and
- 4. Addressing comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students.** This may be achieved through discussions at community and stakeholder meetings, interviews, written responses to written comments received, as well as other means employed by the applicant.

Applicants were asked to complete and submit *Table 2: Public Outreach Information* with their Letter of Intent to demonstrate initial public outreach. The full application should demonstrate fulfillment of all four components. **However, public outreach can and should continue after submission of the application and additional evidence may be presented during the capacity interview and through the public comment process.**

Requests:

1. Describe who participated in public outreach on behalf of the founding group.
2. Provide a summary of public outreach activities.
3. Describe any notable public input that significantly shaped the school design.

Attachments:

- Table 2: Public Outreach Information;** Resubmit Table 2 (**Appendix D**) from the Letter of Intent and update the information contained therein to include outreach conducted to date.
- Evidence of Public Review Process;** This attachment (**Appendix D**) should provide a sampling of documentary evidence related to the public review process. Attachments should be limited to documents that provide meaningful and relevant information about the community outreach and public input. Please do not submit photocopied form letters of support or petitions containing signatures and addresses. Include any evidence that the school informed the community about the

proposed charter school and invited comments and input and provide evidence that comments/input were addressed. Examples of evidence may include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance lists from meetings and events;
- Public meeting flyer with sign-in sheet and signatures;
- Minutes or summaries of public meetings and meetings with stakeholders (school boards, school district administrators, elected officials, community leaders, parent organizations, etc.);
- Surveys distributed and resulting statistical analysis;
- Public awareness campaigns (emails, social media postings, media, etc.) with documented results;
- Responses sent to members of the public who submitted comments/input concerning the proposed charter school;
- Copies of received letters or emails;
- Invitations sent for meetings and events; and
- Media announcements or articles.

CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

General Overview: Schools may contract with a not-for-profit charter management organization (CMO) to provide substantially all the educational or management services for the proposed school. If the applicant group is **not** part of an existing education corporation but still intends to contract with a CMO, please complete the following section. Otherwise, write “Not Applicable” and skip to the next section.

Schools that intend to employ a management organization but have not yet identified one are unlikely to be able to provide sufficient information for the authorizer to evaluate this section and conclude that the school has an adequate management plan.

1. If a management organization has been identified, describe the process for selecting that organization and the rationale for this choice. Also describe the role of the management organization in the charter application process.
2. If a management organization has not been identified, explain the process that will be used to select that organization, including individual roles and responsibilities as well as a timeline and decision criteria for selecting the organization.
3. Explain the fee structure for employing the management organization over the term of the charter, and how the applicant group evaluated the appropriateness of the fee structure.
4. Describe the proposed roles and responsibilities of the management organization in the school and the relationships between school staff and the management organization.
5. Describe the relationship between the management organization and the school’s board of trustees, including whether any employees or board members of the management organization will serve on the proposed school’s board of trustees.
6. Explain how the school’s board of trustees will provide oversight and hold the management organization accountable for achieving the school’s mission and goals.

Attachments:

- Charter Management Organization information (Appendix E);** If a management organization has been identified, provide the following:
 - A list of any other schools managed by the organization in New York and in other states, including contact information;
 - Academic performance data from all schools managed by the organization for the past three years;
 - A summary of the organization’s fiscal performance for the past three years and a description of the organization’s current financial plan;
 - A description of services to be provided by the organization; and
 - A description of the management structure and a summary of key personnel at the organization.
- Proposed Management Contract (Appendix E);** submit a copy of the management contract or term sheet.
- Management Organization Business Plan (Appendix E);** submit a business plan for the management organization using the format outlined in **Appendix EE- CMO Business Plan**.

FACILITIES

General Overview: Applicant groups must demonstrate the capacity to find, secure and maintain a suitable facility for their school, often for an organization that is growing over time. Applicant groups need not have secured a facility to receive a charter but must have a clear plan for securing one by the time the school is scheduled to begin serving students. If the applicant group is proposing to incubate or locate in NYCDOE public space, the applicant group must still provide an alternate plan to secure private facilities by responding to all the requests below.

Please note: If the facilities to be used by the proposed school are not known at the time the application is submitted, the applicant must notify the Board of Regents within ten business days of acquiring facilities for such school. The charter school must also obtain a certificate of occupancy for such facilities prior to the date on which instruction is to commence at the school.

1. Explain the school's facility needs over the charter term, including any community resources the school will need to implement its program, e.g., off-site physical education, arts, science labs, etc.
2. If facilities have been identified for part or all the charter term, describe their location, condition, and capacity for meeting the school's needs. Include any renovation requirements and timelines.
3. If facilities have not been identified for the entire charter term, describe the school's plan for identifying and securing a facility, including who will be involved in this process and the timeline.
4. Explain the school's funding plan for its facility, including all related revenue and costs, e.g., rental assistance, utilities, maintenance, renovations, etc.

Attachments:

- Complete the facilities table (**Appendix F**) regarding minimum facility requirements over the charter term. Applicants may add additional types of space that are necessary for the implementation of their proposed program.

General Overview: The existing education corporation or charter management organization that seeks to operate multiple charter schools and/or add to a network of existing charter schools, whether these schools are in New York State or another state, is required to include a strategic business/growth plan with the full application to demonstrate capacity to take on additional schools.

Most new operator applicant groups are not required to submit a business plan with the standard application. Applicants are encouraged to contact CSO staff to ascertain if a business plan is required based on any proposed affiliations with charter schools authorized by any entity other than the Board of Regents.

Charter schools that replicate can implement a variety of organization structures to ensure the efficient operation of multiple schools. These structures may include, but are not limited to, the creation of a charter management organization (CMO), a shared services team, or merging education corporations. For the purposes of the new school RFP, these entities are referred to collectively as a Comprehensive Management Organizations. For reference, see [Definition of an Entity that Provides Comprehensive Management Services](#).

The business plan should provide the following information: If an applicant believes that a question in this section is not applicable to their situation, the applicant should so state and explain why the applicant believes the question does not apply.

A. Comprehensive Management Organization Information:

1. Name of the Comprehensive Management Organization;
2. Role of the Comprehensive Management Organization;
3. State of incorporation;
4. State(s) in which the Comprehensive Management Organization(s) operates;
5. Year founded; and
6. The contact name, address, phone number, and email address for each member of the Comprehensive Management Organization leadership team;

B. Comprehensive Management Organization History and Growth Plan:

1. Describe the Comprehensive Management Organization's mission, strategic vision, and desired impact.
2. Provide a brief overview of the organization's history. List all charter revocations or surrenders, bankruptcies, school closures, non-renewals, or shortened or conditional renewals for any of the schools operated by the organization and provide explanations. Explain any performance deficits or compliance violations that have led to formal authorizer intervention with any school operated by the organization. Provide details as to how such deficiencies were resolved.
3. List and describe all schools currently operated by the Comprehensive Management Organization.

4. List and describe all future schools the Comprehensive Management Organization plans to operate (excluding the school described in the current RFP application).
5. Describe the Comprehensive Management Organization's five-year growth plan for developing new schools in New York and other states.
6. Provide a rationale for the proposed five-year growth plan; for example, how the organization determined the appropriate pace and scope of the proposed growth and why the organization is well-positioned to implement the growth plan.
7. Specifically identify the key risks associated with this growth plan and describe the steps the organization is taking to mitigate these risks. Respondents should demonstrate an understanding of the challenges of replication in general and as they relate specifically to their organization's growth plans. The response should detail specific risks and explain how the organization will minimize the impact of each of these risks, and ideally provide contingency plans for them. Examples may include:
 - Inability to secure facilities/facilities financing;
 - Difficulty raising philanthropic funding;
 - Insufficient leadership pipeline/difficulty recruiting school leaders; and
 - Ambiguous student performance outcomes and the need to curtail expansion if performance drops.
8. Discuss lessons learned during any past replication efforts. For example, identify challenges encountered and how the organization addressed them, as well as how the organization would minimize such challenges for the proposed schools.

C. Performance of Existing Schools:

1. Provide an overview of prior performance across all schools ever operated by the Comprehensive Management Organization, including closed schools and schools that moved away from the organization.
2. Select one or more of the consistently high-performing schools that the organization operates and discuss the school's academic performance.
3. Select one or more of the organization's schools whose performance is relatively low or not satisfactory and discuss the school's academic performance and efforts to improve it.

D. Market Analysis and Selection of Target Communities:

1. Describe how the target communities in New York State were identified and selected as attractive markets to the Comprehensive Management Organization. If the existing portfolio does not include schools in New York, provide the rationale for entering New York.
2. Discuss the Comprehensive Management Organization's competition for students and staff in the target communities, assess student demand, and describe the organization's competitive advantages.

E. Attachments:

Provide the following documentation with the business plan narrative:

- A. **By-laws:** Include the organization's current by-laws.
- B. **Meeting schedule:** Provide a copy of the Comprehensive Management Organization's board meeting schedule for the current year or school year, and a proposed schedule for the first year of operation of the proposed new school.
- C. **Organizational Chart:** Provide an Organizational Chart that shows the staffing structure and reporting responsibilities for the organization's board, administration, and staff.
- D. **Management Contracts:** Identify which services and costs are included in any management contract as well as services and costs billed in addition to the management contract fee. In the case of separately billed services/goods shared across schools, please explain how costs will be distributed among schools. If the organization does not partner with a Charter Management Organization (CMO), then describe which centralized services the organization would offer, how costs would be allocated to the various schools, and how the schools will pay for those services. If there would be a contract or a shared services agreement, provide the most recent executed agreement as well as any new proposed agreement. If the parties are still negotiating some provisions, provide a draft agreement.
- E. **Philanthropic Support:** Provide a detailed list of donor organizations, along with the dollar amount contributed, for the past three years. If philanthropic funding is included in the budget, then provide commitment letters from the top five contributors. Note, letters should include a statement that the contributor plans to continue the relationship with the organization and note any restrictions on the funds, but does not need to cite actual funding amounts.
- F. **Consolidated Financial Reports:** Provide copies of, or other access to, the three most recent annual consolidated audited financial reports, including management or advisory letters and related notes. Provide the same information for related entities, subsidiaries, real estate or other service entities that would provide goods or services to the charter school or the organization.
- G. **Audited Financial Statements:** For the Comprehensive Management Organization and all charter schools operated by the Comprehensive Management Organization, provide copies of, or other access to, all audited financial statements and all management or advisory letters issued during the previous three years by any independent auditors who prepared the audited financial statements or any governmental agency (i.e. the NYC or NYS Comptroller) that conducted an audit. Be sure to include any out of state charter school audited financial statements.
- H. **Form 990s:** Provide copies of, or other access to, all IRS Form 990s filed during the previous three years by the organization including any non-SUNY authorized charter school education corporations operating a school presently managed by the organization.
- I. **Authorization to do Business in New York State:** Provide evidence that the organization is authorized to do business in New York State (New York corporate formation documents from the Secretary of State or copy of approved application for authority to do business in New York from the Secretary) or the New York State Board of Regents.
- J. **Not-for-Profit Status:** Provide evidence of the organization's not-for-profit state and federal status, including tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) or other provision of the Internal Revenue Code, if applicable.

- K. **Client List:** Provide a list of clients with whom the organization has contracted over the preceding four years. Include clients with which the organization has severed the relationship, and clients that have severed the relationship with the organization for financial deficiencies or malfeasance, charter revocation or non-renewal, statutory, regulatory, or charter compliance deficiencies, conflict of interest or other reasons, and explain the reason(s) for the severance of each relationship.

- L. **Litigation:** Provide a list of any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, that has involved the organization, its related entities, or any of the charter schools it operates. If applicable, provide demand, any response to the demand, and results of the arbitration or litigation.

