



**NEVADA**  
**Department of**  
**Education**

# **Application for Authorization to Sponsor Charter Schools in Nevada – Review Rubric**

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Application for Authorization to Sponsor Charter Schools in Nevada – Review Rubric

Applicant Name	
Entity Type	
Date Application Submitted	
Date of Applicant Interview	
Reviewer Name	
Preliminary Recommendation	

### Overview and Rating Criteria

Nevada’s sponsor approval process is designed to assess how effectively an applicant proposes to fulfill the role of a charter school sponsor based on the requirements set out in state statute and regulation.

Reviewers will read and evaluate each application section individually and as a cohesive whole, and then assign one of the following ratings for each response.

**Meets expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation demonstrate substantial compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, and nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices. Beyond compliance, the applicant’s response also provides sufficient detail to demonstrate a thoughtful, high-quality approach to both planning and execution of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. To earn a meets expectations rating, applicants do not need to have every process formally in place; reviewers can and should use their professional judgment to assess whether the applicants have amassed or will secure the necessary capacity to do so based on the comprehensiveness of their rationale, page limits notwithstanding.

**Approaches expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation demonstrate either inconsistent compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, and/or nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices; OR, the applicant’s response does not provide adequate detail to clearly demonstrate a thoughtful, high-quality approach to both planning and execution of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. Specific requests for additional information and clarification will be provided.

**Does not meet expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation does not demonstrate compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, or nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices. The applicant’s response fails to describe a thoughtful or high-quality approach to both planning and execution

of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. Specific deficiencies will be identified and shared with the applicant.

***In order to be approved as a charter school sponsor, an applicant must receive a “meets expectations” rating on a majority of rubric items, with no final “does not meet expectations” ratings.***

## Section A: Agency Commitment and Capacity

This section provides applicants an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity and commitment to fulfill the responsibilities of a charter school sponsor in Nevada.

### **1. Sponsoring Mission:** *Does the applicant have a clear and compelling mission for sponsoring charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Identify the applicant’s clear and compelling mission and indicate how it fully aligns with the intent of NRS 388A.			
b. Describe how the applicant will carry out or further its mission by sponsoring charter schools.			

### **2. Sponsor’s Organizational Goals:** *Does the applicant have clear organizational goals and timeframes for achievement that are aligned with its sponsoring mission and Nevada’s charter school statute?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Identify the applicant’s clear organizational goals, criteria, and timeframes for achievement.			
b. Indicate how the organizational goals align with the authorizing mission and NRS 388A.			

**3. Sponsor’s Structure of Operations:** *Will the applicant operate with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities sufficient to effectively oversee a portfolio of charter schools?*

<p>a. Describe a clear structure of duties and responsibilities that will be sufficient to effectively oversee and meet the needs of the portfolio of charter schools, including how the structure will be updated, if and when necessary.</p>			
<p>b. Provide an organizational chart, including the full-time equivalencies of these positions, that shows clear lines of reporting and authority/decision-making and, if applicable, showing projected organizational changes due to proposed expansion over the next five years.</p>			
<p>c. Describe how the applicant will appropriately manage, retain, and safeguard school and student information and records relating to authorizing.</p>			

**4. Sponsoring Staff Expertise:** *Will the applicant have the appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee its portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Provide the background and experience of proposed sponsor staff (such as through resumes and/or vitae), including individuals both paid (e.g., staff) and unpaid (e.g., board members) as well as contractors hired by the applicant, that collectively demonstrate the applicant's appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee a portfolio of charter schools.			
b. Include job descriptions for all proposed sponsorship staff, including those that will be hired in the future.			

**5. Sponsor Knowledge and Skill Development of Leadership and Staff:** *Does the applicant have a plan to build the knowledge, skill base, and network of its sponsoring leadership and staff through professional development?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
▪ Describe the applicant's work to date to develop the foundational understanding of authorizing needed to submit this application at staff and leadership levels.			
▪ Describe the frequency and nature of potential professional development and how these activities will align with the applicant's operations, mission, and organizational goals for			

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.			

**6. Sponsor's Operational Budget for the Portfolio of Charter Schools:** *Does the applicant have a plan to allocate resources commensurate with its stated budget, and the needs and responsibilities of sponsoring a portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
<p>a. Include an anticipated five-year budget (for example, FY 2025-FY 2029) outlining the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipated revenue sources such as fees collected annually from schools and additional funds from outside sources.</li> <li>• Anticipated expenditures such as staff, travel, lease, consultants, office costs (e.g., equipment, supplies), etc.</li> <li>• Anticipated staff expenditures and personnel budget increases in relation to portfolio growth.</li> <li>• Create several budget scenarios based on different potential portfolio growth patterns. For each scenario, include detailed assumptions and explain any adjustments identifying potential sources of extra funding to cover any changes in costs.</li> <li>• Based on your entity's current statistics and trends,</li> </ul>			

<p>calculate 7% of the school-aged population. Provide a table showing the number of schools that could be opened in the next five years without exceeding this 7% limit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop detailed budget scenarios that address a range of potential portfolio growth patterns, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Optimistic Growth:</b> Assumptions and adjustments for scenarios where enrollment exceeds projections.</li> <li>▪ <b>Pessimistic Growth:</b> Assumptions and adjustments for scenarios where enrollment falls below projections.</li> <li>▪ <b>Breakeven Analysis:</b> Identify the breakeven point for enrollment and funding.</li> <li>▪ <b>Worst-Case Scenario:</b> Assumptions and adjustments for the worst-case scenario regarding enrollment and funding.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For each scenario, clearly outline all assumptions, explain any necessary adjustments, and identify potential sources of additional funding to address any shortfall in revenues or significant unanticipated increased costs.</li> <li>• Calculate 7% of the school-aged population based on your entity's current</li> </ul>			
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statistics and trends. Create a table showing the number of schools that could be opened in the next five years without exceeding the 7% limit.			
b. Provide the target number and size of schools for the portfolio of charter schools for a five-year period, and the rationale for this projection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how your entity plans to address any budgetary shortfalls in the event that enrollment does not meet your projected scenarios.</li> </ul>	Yes		

**7. Sponsor's Operational Conflicts of Interest:** *How will the applicant implement a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning a portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Include the applicant's clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.	Yes		

### Section A: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Please describe the applicant's strengths and weaknesses to support the ratings provided above. Limit of 500 characters.

### Section A: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment

What are the top five questions you'd ask? Limit of 500 characters.

Section B. Application Process and New School Decision Making

8. New Charter School Decisions: Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals? Does the applicant outline decision-making standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific new charter application policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit transparent, rigorous, and comprehensive new charter school application instructions and questions, evaluative criteria, timelines, review standards and processes, and applicant guidance that align with each of the requirements articulated in NRS 388A.246.			

**9. Determining Readiness to Open:** *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate a new charter school's readiness to open to serve students and families?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific ready to open policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit documentation that includes the pre-opening tasks, in alignment with NRS 388A.270(1)(c), that the sponsor has determined must be completed before the commencement of operation to ensure that the charter school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements, and a description of the process for proactively monitoring the activity of all schools between new charter award and projected opening, assessing sufficiency of documentation, and intervening when necessary.			

## Section C. Performance Contracting

**10. Contract Term, Negotiation, and Execution:** *How will the applicant execute contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the applicant as a sponsor?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific contracting policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit a charter contract template that complies with NRS 388A.270 and articulates the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcome measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. Describe how renewal and change in authorizer contracts will be fully executed no later than 60 days before the charter school commences operation and describe under what circumstances and how the applicant will execute contract amendments for material changes to current school plans			

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
when necessary (not in lieu of conducting renewal evaluations).			

**11. Performance Outcomes and Standards:** *Will the applicant utilize a performance framework under which it executes contracts with clear, measurable, and attainable performance outcomes and standards? Will the applicant implement clear and consistent processes designed to protect charter schools' autonomy while also holding them accountable to its academic, financial, and operational performance outcomes and standards?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific performance management policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Provide a comprehensive performance framework addressing the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The performance framework identifies the primary purpose of the charter schools in its portfolio is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and identifies additional purposes per statute.</li> </ul>			

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance framework defines clear, measurable, and attainable academic, operational, and financial performance outcomes and standards for all schools in its portfolio and consequences to hold charter schools accountable for meeting or not meeting performance outcomes and standards.</li> <li>• The performance framework is included in the charter contracts the applicant executes with schools.</li> <li>• If the comprehensive performance framework allows for flexibility in negotiating performance outcomes with schools individually, describe a plan to establish contract outcomes/goals that are specific and strategic, measurable, attainable, results-based, and time-bound.</li> </ul>			

## Section D. Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

**12. Sponsor's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio of Charter Schools:** *Will the applicant have robust processes to monitor and oversee charter schools in the areas of academics, operations, and finances?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific financial oversight policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Describe (1) the academic, financial, operational and legal reporting charter schools will be responsible for providing to the sponsor; (2) an oversight plan that clearly establishes the criteria, processes, and procedures the applicant will use to competently evaluate academic, financial and operational performance and monitor compliance with applicable law; (3) how evaluative findings will be communicated to individual schools via annual reports; and (4) how the applicant's ongoing oversight informs its standards and processes for technical support, intervention, termination, and renewal decisions for its portfolio of charter schools.			

**13. Sponsor’s Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action, and Response to Complaints:** *Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, intervention, and corrective action?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific intervention policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit the (1) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes to address and resolve complaints, including forms if applicable; (2) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes for intervention and corrective action; and (3) how the applicant’s standards and processes for intervention, corrective action, and response to complaints align with its ongoing oversight of the portfolio of charter schools.			



## Section E. Renewal, Closure, and Revocation Decision Making

**14. Charter School Renewal or Termination Decisions:** *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions? Does the applicant outline charter school renewal and termination decision standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific renewal and non-renewal policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit documented processes and/or templates for formal written evaluations of each charter school's performance to be disseminated before the sponsor renews the charter contract; the standards for determining consequences for meeting or not meeting performance standards; and a school closure plan, including the applicant's role in the orderly closure of a school in the event of termination, revocation, nonrenewal or voluntary relinquishment of the charter.			

Sections B, C, D, and E: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Please describe the applicant’s strengths and weaknesses to support the ratings provided above. Limit of 500 characters.

Sections B, C, D, and E: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment

What are the top five questions you’d ask? Limit of 500 characters.

Section F. Sponsor Workplan

The Department recognizes that the applicant will not have every single authorizing policy, system, and procedure in place in a finalized state for its future sponsorship of charter schools upon submission of this application. As a result, and to demonstrate the sound planning needed to be ready to take on such responsibilities, applicants must submit a workplan in their preferred format with a clear timeframe and appropriate milestones that clearly shows how they will develop the internal capacities and implement the policies necessary for high quality oversight of charter schools prior to releasing their first Request for Proposals for New School Applications. Strong responses will align with applicants’ narrative responses and include details as to responsible individuals or groups and how they will be held accountable for completion of the workplan.

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
<p>This workplan should include, but not be limited to, plans for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Internal and external communications to internal staff, the public, the applicant’s school community and to potential charter school applicants or transfer schools.</li></ul>			

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No Please Circle)	Questions?	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapting policy, process, and template documents and implementation plans to local context.</li> <li>Staff recruitment and hiring plan for sponsorship-related positions.</li> <li>Local needs assessment to identify K-12 educational and community needs in alignment with the applicant's mission and organizational goals, as stated in Section A of this application.</li> <li>Ongoing professional development on quality authorizing principles and practices.</li> <li>Systems for charter-school related data collection and compliance reporting per state requirements.</li> </ul>			

#### Section F Workplan: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Please describe the applicant's strengths and weaknesses to support the rating provided above. Limit of 500 characters.

## Section F Workplan: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment

What are the top five questions you'd ask? Limit of 500 characters.