



# **New Jersey Charter School Application October 2015 Expedited Round For Experienced Operators**

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# October 2015 Charter School Application

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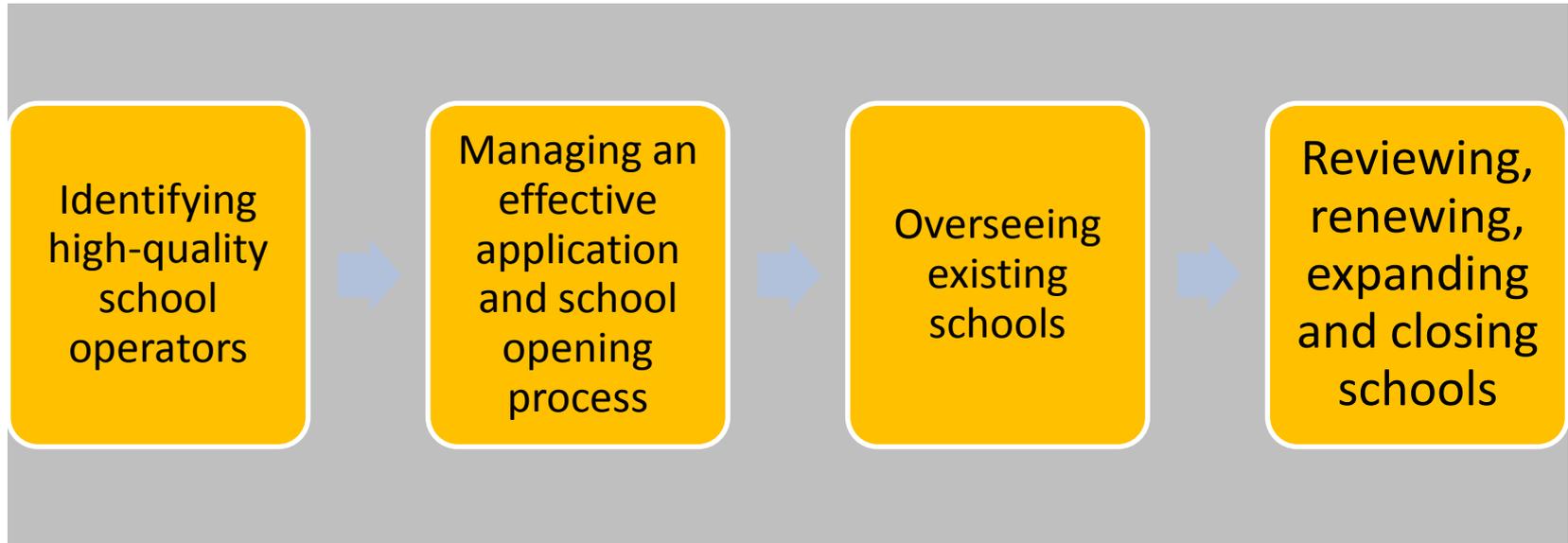
# Mission

The Office of Charter Schools (OCS) provides New Jersey families with quality schools. OCS authorizes charter schools consistent with national best practice in charter school authorizing\*, offering school operators autonomy and opportunities for innovation in exchange for accountability for student outcomes.

\* NACSA Principles and Standards



# OCS Core Functions



The performance framework provides a consistent definition of school success, from recruitment and application through renewal, that is aligned with DOE goals for all schools.

# Core Values

## **Focus on student outcomes:**

- We use the OCS performance framework to focus everyone's attention on student achievement; all other considerations are secondary.

## **High expectations:**

- We are committed to ensuring that New Jersey families have access to charter schools that will "raise the bar" and "close the gap." We are also committed to conducting our authorizing work consistent with NACSA principles and standards.

## **Safeguard public interests:**

- We base our decisions on applicable laws and regulations with a focus on whether or not schools are spending public funds responsibly, practicing sound governance and adhering to relevant laws and charter requirements.

## **Transparency:**

- Using rigorous and transparent processes, and the best data available, we provide stakeholders with clear, relevant and timely information about charter schools, charter school authorizing and charter school performance.

## **Continuous improvement:**

- We expect to learn from our authorizing work and get better at it over time. We encourage input from stakeholders and reflect on our practice to identify opportunities for improvement.



## Key Criteria

- NJDOE seeks to approve schools that are likely to produce strong educational outcomes for students
- October 2015 is the “expedited” round for experienced operators. The OCS expects that applications in this round will demonstrate:
  - A clear, focused, results-oriented mission statement that aligns with all parts of the application;
  - Documented success with the population that the school is likely to serve;
  - An educational program that has evidence of being effective for the student population;
  - Strong and diverse leadership;
  - Capacity to successfully implement and sustain multiple schools; and
  - Strong financial planning and management.



# Application Timeline Phase One

August 24, 2015 1:00 PM	Technical Assistance Webinar
October 15, 4:15 PM	Phase One Application Due via Epicenter
October 22, 2015 4:15 PM	Receipts Due to NJDOE via Epicenter (District(s) of Residence)
November 17, 2015	Applicants notified of Qualified Applicant status and eligibility to move on to Phase Two application



# Application Timeline Phase Two

December 21, 2015 4:15 PM	Phase Two Application Due via Epicenter (For Qualified Applicants Only)
December 28, 2015 4:15 PM	Receipts Due to NJDOE (County/District(s) of Residence)
January 25-29, 2016	Applicant Interviews
February 15, 2016	Charter Application Initial Approval
June 30, 2016	School Preparedness Process Completed
July 15, 2016	Final Granting of Charter



## Application Access

In order to gain access to the application, applicants must request an Epicenter user name and password by contacting Margery Wood at [margery.wood@doe.nj.state.us](mailto:margery.wood@doe.nj.state.us). Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:11-2.1(b) new charter school applicants must establish an online account no later than **five business days** prior to the due date for the application.

Applicants must provide the school's proposed name, lead applicant name, email and proposed district (s) of residence in the email.



# Application Content and Format

Follow **ALL DIRECTIONS** in the Application related to Content and Format:

- 25 Page Limit for Phase 1
- Respond to each statement in the text of the application and not in the attachments, unless an attachment is explicitly requested
- Edit document for spelling, grammar, formatting and completeness



# Application Submission

- Training to upload applications will be provided upon completion of this presentation.
- The Epicenter system will close at 4:15 PM on October 15, 2015; no further uploads will be accepted past the due date.
- There will be NO hard copies submitted to the NJ Department of Education or the County Office of Education.
- Application hard copies MUST be submitted **to each respective district or districts** in your region of residence by 4:15 PM on October 15, 2015.
- Applications not submitted to all districts of residence by the due date are subject to immediate disqualification and will not be reviewed by the NJDOE.



# Definitions

For the purposes of this application the following terms have the following meanings:

- **“Contiguous district boards of education”** means school districts that comprise a region of residence that all share a common border.
- **“Experienced Operators”** are either applicants that have previously operated a charter school or managed a network of charter schools; or applicants that intend to contract with an Education Service Provider (ESP) such as a Charter Management Organization (CMO) or Education Management Organization (EMO).
- **“Founding Team”** means a group of individuals applying to replicate a school model in New Jersey. Founding team members may transition to Board of Trustees members or employees of the school.
- **“Qualified founder”** means an individual who can establish a charter school pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-4: *A charter school may be established by teaching staff members, parents with children attending the schools of the district, or a combination of teaching staff members and parents.*
- **“Mission”** means a succinct, compelling statement of the school’s goals and values.
- **“District of residence”** means the school district in which a charter school facility is physically located; if a charter school is approved with a region of residence comprised of contiguous school districts, that region is the charter school's district of residence.
- **“Vision”** describes how the school will fulfill its mission.



# Application Sections

Mission, Vision &  
Education Program

Demonstration of  
Need & Community  
Engagement

Enrollment &  
Admissions  
Summary

Applicant & Founder  
Information

Experienced  
Operator  
Information

Public School  
Conversion to a  
Charter School  
(if applicable)

Nonpublic School  
Conversion to a  
Charter School  
(if applicable)



# Mission, Vision & Education Program Criteria

- Mission is succinct, comprehensible, outcome-focused, measurable.
- Reflect the mission throughout all sections of the application.
- The vision provides a clear description of how the proposed school will fulfill its mission.
- Include key components and unique elements of the educational program .
- Describe how the key components and unique elements coalesce into the proposed school model.
- Provide a summary of the research base and performance record, including specific citations, demonstrating success with the proposed target population.
- Align the education program to the school's mission and vision.



## Demonstration of Need & Community Engagement Criteria

- Describes the rationale for serving this population and a compelling explanation of how the proposed school will meet needs and offer the greatest educational benefit to students.
- Provides information regarding educational options that are available to students and the track record of those options (traditional, charter, private, etc.).
- Demonstrates knowledge of and connections within the community.
- Includes evidence of having engaged parents and families in the application process, including surveys, letters of support.
- Provides a practical and dynamic plan for ongoing engagement with the community/families.



## Enrollment and Admissions Summary Criteria

- A complete enrollment chart that allows for a natural progression of students year to year.
- Enrollment aligns with mission and educational plan.
- Includes a clear and compelling rationale for opening at identified grade levels/grade spans and evidence of capacity to promote student success.
- Describes how student recruitment and admissions policies will provide equal access to all interested students and families.
- Demonstrates that enrollment and admissions programs and policies will result in serving a cross-section of the community's school-age population, including at-risk, special education, and English language learning students.
- Recruitment and admissions policies that comply with N.J.S.A 18A:36A and are aligned with the Office of Charter Schools' Document "Guidelines for Access and Equity in New Jersey Charter Schools."



# Applicant and Founder Information Criteria

- Founders who represent the interests of multiple stakeholders (parents/teachers/community members).
- Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Educational Program, Organizational Plan and Financial Plan. successfully, including capacities in areas such as:
  - School leadership, administration, and governance;
  - Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
  - Performance management;
  - Staffing, school start-up, general operations, facilities management; and
  - Financial management, fundraising, accounting.
- Signed and completed statements of assurances.
- Provide resumes and biographies of team members.



## Experienced Operator Information Criteria

- The organization's vision includes key strategies for implementation and identifies possible constraints.
- Provides clear evidence of the operator's capacity to operate new schools successfully while maintaining the quality in existing schools.
- Demonstrates past success in replicating its school model and a stable history of financial viability.
- The organization outlines plans for the Board to complete due diligence in selection of an ESP.
- Provides a clear delineation of responsibilities between the ESP, Board of Trustees, school leaders.
- Demonstrates effective governance and management structures and systems.



## Conversion Schools

- Nonpublic and Public School Conversion Criteria
  - The rationale for conversion and performance record of school is strong and compelling.
  - The school has a track record and capacity to successfully serve the targeted population.
- Nonpublic Only:
  - A "high-performing nonpublic school" means a nonpublic school that ranked in the 66th percentile or higher on a norm-referenced achievement test in the school year prior to the school year in which a conversion application is submitted pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:11-2.7. A school that does not meet the criteria by the Phase 2 application will not be eligible for conversion
  - The school provides evidence that curriculum will be aligned to Common Core State Standards.
  - The school has a clear understanding of regulations and specific plan regarding teacher certification.

## Exhibits

- Exhibit 1a: Demographic Analysis Form
- Exhibit 2a: Charter School Founding Team Member Information Form
- Exhibit 3a: Statement of Assurances Form
- Exhibit 4a: Experienced Operator Information Sheet



## Phase Two

- The Department will review and score all Phase One Applications against a holistic rubric.
- All applicants will be notified of their status on November 17, 2015.
- For those applicants deemed ‘Qualified Applicants’, the Phase Two application will be due on December 21, 2015.
- The Phase Two application is limited to 75 total pages, excluding additional required attachments.
- The Phase Two application will ask more in detail questions regarding the Educational, Organization, Financial and Overall capacity.



## Common Mistakes

- Choose a name that is unique to your school. The following words are used in many charter schools in the state:
  - ✓ University
  - ✓ Community
  - ✓ Liberty
  - ✓ Academy
  - ✓ School of Excellence
  - ✓ International
- You must include the words “Charter School” in the name of the school.
- Do not use the name of a private entity in the name of the charter school.
- Carefully choose your founders and ensure they will be available in December/January to complete Phase 2 application and will be available in late January for potential in-depth interviews.
- Identify at least one viable facility.
- Upload the application in correct format and order.
- ***Proofread.***



# Office of Charter Schools' Staff

Contact Name	Email
Harold Lee	<a href="mailto:harold.lee@doe.state.nj.us">harold.lee@doe.state.nj.us</a>
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## Additional Resources:

NJDOE, Office of Charter Schools' Website

<http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/>

Performance Frameworks

<http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/PerformanceFramework.pdf>

[http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/accountability/OrganizationalPerformanceFramework\\_NJDOE\\_08132015.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/accountability/OrganizationalPerformanceFramework_NJDOE_08132015.pdf)

NJDOE Data and Reports

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/data/>

Access and Equity Guidance

<http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/equity/guidelines.pdf>



# Questions?