

Criteria for Evaluation	Evaluators will look for evidence of the following:	Rating
<b>SECTION I. AUTHORIZER STRATEGIC VISION FOR CHARTERING</b>		
<p>1.1 The vision clearly aligns with the statutory intent and purposes for charter schools. The vision need not address every statutory purpose; however, it should align clearly with at least one of those purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant district articulates an intentional strategic vision and plan for chartering, including clear priorities, goals, and time frames for achievement.</li> <li>• The vision articulates how it aligns with at least one of the statutory purposes set forth in RCW 28A.710.005.</li> </ul>	
<p>1.2. The district clearly articulates any additional purposes it may have for chartering that are particular priorities for the district. Any additional purposes address clearly identified educational needs of the district, and are supported by specific evidence and examples that illustrate the identified needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has conducted a preliminary analysis of the geographical area it serves, and identified specific needs or priorities (e.g., programmatic, grade range, location, target population,).</li> <li>• Any additional chartering purposes or priorities are based on verifiable evidence and solid analysis.</li> </ul>	
<p>1.3. The district articulates in specific terms how it will give priority to proposals to serve at-risk students or students from low-performing schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At-risk students include but are not limited to students who do not meet minimum standards of academic proficiency, students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, students in chronically low-performing schools, students with higher than average disciplinary sanctions, students with limited English proficiency, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students identified as having special educational needs. Evidence of prioritization may include, for example, plans for targeted outreach and solicitation of proposals or incentives to applicants for serving students at-risk.</li> </ul>	
<p>1.4. The district’s response describes with specificity the desired characteristics of the schools it will charter, such as types of schools, student populations to be served, and geographic areas to be served, along with the demographic data and instructional research it will use to evaluate needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has identified specific types of proposals that it would like to receive (e.g., college preparatory, dual language, arts, dropout recovery) in order to target identified service gaps.</li> <li>• The district links sound research and data to identification of priorities for charter proposals.</li> <li>• The district articulates how the schools it wishes to authorize might differ from schools it currently operates with regard to such features as staffing, schedule, curriculum, pedagogy, and community engagement.</li> <li>• The district has identified potential ways to encourage desired proposal types, such as priority for available competitive funds or facilities.</li> <li>• In the draft RFP or other materials, the district articulates its strategic vision and chartering priorities, but does not exclude consideration of applications that propose to fulfill other goals.</li> </ul>	

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<p>1.5. The response reflects a commitment to providing flexibility for charter schools in day-to-day operations, including respecting the autonomy of the charter school board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district’s vision for chartering articulates how the applicant will protect the autonomy of the charter schools it oversees, particularly regarding personnel, school vision and culture, instructional program, use of time, and budgeting. The district’s vision does not impose district processes, requirements or systems unnecessarily on charter schools in areas such as, for example, schedule, curriculum, and personnel policies.</li> <li>• For any fee-based services that the district intends to offer charter schools, the district is committed to making purchase of those services voluntary for schools.</li> </ul>	
<p>1.6. The response demonstrates a sound understanding of and commitment to performance-based accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision articulates how the district will promote the accountability of the charter schools it oversees by measuring performance against standards and targets, ensuring compliance with applicable laws, and taking appropriate actions when standards are not met or the school is not in compliance with applicable laws or its charter contract.</li> <li>• The vision reflects a commitment to maintaining high standards for all charter schools, regardless of whether a school is targeted to identified priorities.</li> <li>• The district’s vision reflects a consistent and appropriate balance between autonomy and accountability.</li> </ul>	
<b>SECTION II. AUTHORIZER CAPACITY AND COMMITMENT</b>		
<p><u>Planning</u> 2.1. The description of capacity conveys a clear and accurate understanding of the district’s duties and responsibilities as a charter school authorizer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The description indicates sound understanding of authorizers’ responsibilities for overseeing charter schools by setting clear expectations, collecting relevant performance data, evaluating performance on an ongoing basis, and holding schools accountable.</li> <li>• The applicant district describes ongoing actions and procedures to ensure understanding of the duties and responsibilities of a charter school authorizer on the parts of school board directors, central administrators and staff.</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Human Resources</u> 2.2. Staff resources to be devoted to charter authorizing and oversight are appropriate to fulfill the district’s authorizing responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district identifies resources appropriate for each of the core authorizer functions including application decision-making, performance contracting, ongoing oversight and evaluation, and revocation or renewal decision-making.</li> <li>• Staff resources are articulated in time allocations (FTEs) that are likely to be sufficient based on the district’s anticipated authorizing activity.</li> </ul>	
<p>2.3. The district clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of chartering staff, and provides thorough and clear job descriptions. The organizational chart shows clear lines of reporting and authority for decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan clearly articulates where primary authorizing responsibilities reside among district positions and personnel.</li> <li>• The plan demonstrates understanding of district functions that will need to assume some authorizing responsibilities.</li> <li>• Lines of authority indicate appropriate prioritization of charter school authorizing.</li> </ul>	

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<p>2.4. The district demonstrates that it has or will secure access, through staff, contractual relationships or interagency collaboration, to expertise in all areas essential to charter school authorizing and oversight, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leadership</li> <li>• Curriculum, instruction and assessment</li> <li>• Special education, ELL, and other diverse student needs</li> <li>• Performance management</li> <li>• Operations, e.g., law, finance, and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan identifies clearly and appropriately where in the district the required expertise for essential authorizing responsibilities currently resides or, in the alternative, how it will be accessed outside the district.</li> <li>• The plan clearly and appropriately identifies areas where it anticipates the need to build, expand or contract for additional capacity with respect to authorizing responsibilities, and articulates a viable plan for doing so consistent with its estimates of financial needs.</li> <li>• The plan shows how the district has or will access sufficient expertise to evaluate an applicant's business plan and financial strength and to oversee the financial performance of any approved school.</li> <li>• The plan indicates how the district will seek opportunities for professional development to achieve and maintain high standards of authorizing practice.</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Financial Resources</u></p> <p>2.5. The estimates of the financial needs of the authorizer and projected resources for authorizing are reasonable and supported, to the extent possible, by verifiable data, including such data about the district's overall financial condition as will demonstrate capacity for the new task.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The estimates of financial needs are reasonably sound and well-aligned with other key aspects of the plan including allocation of staff resources and access to needed expertise when the district needs to acquire or access expertise it does not currently possess.</li> <li>• The district indicates if it is in Financial Watch status, based on the financial health indicators developed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, for the most recent year for which such data are available.</li> </ul>	
<b>SECTION III. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS</b>		
<p>3.1. The draft or outline of the RFP includes all components of RFPs required by RCW 28A.710.130(1)(b).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district demonstrates through its work on the draft or outline of the RFP that it is prepared to publish an annual RFP by the date established by the SBE.</li> <li>• The RFP includes (1) the authorizer's strategic vision for chartering, with content that substantially meets the criteria in Section 1; (2) the authorizer's draft performance framework, with content that substantially meets the criteria in Section 4; (3) application evaluation criteria; and (4) application questions and guidelines for formatting and content.</li> <li>• The RFP requires applicants to articulate the components of a comprehensive school plan, as articulated in RCW 28A.710.130(2)(a) through (ff).</li> <li>• The RFP requires applicants to demonstrate that they will provide educational services that at a minimum meet the basic education standards set forth in RCW 28A.150.220, including but not limited to requirements for school days per school year, instructional hours and high school graduation.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP includes distinct requirements and criteria for: (1) conversion charter school applicants, including demonstrated support by a majority of teachers or parents; (2) applicants proposing to contract with Educational Service Providers (ESPs) consistent with NACSA’s <i>Principles &amp; Standards for Quality Authorizing</i>; (3) applicants that propose to operate virtual or online charter schools, consistent with NACSA <i>Principles &amp; Standards</i>; and (4) applicants that already operate schools in other states, including evidence of past performance, evidence of success serving at-risk students, and capacity for growth and replication.</li> </ul>	
<p>3.2. The draft or outline of the RFP demonstrates that the district intends to implement a comprehensive application process that follows fair procedures and rigorous criteria, based on a performance framework meeting the requirements of Washington’s charter school law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district shows that its RFP process will be open, well-publicized and transparent.</li> <li>• The draft RFP includes a clear and realistic timeline that outlines key milestones and explains how each stage of the process is conducted.</li> <li>• The RFP includes a strategy for effectively disseminating information regarding the application process, approval criteria, and decisions to the public.</li> <li>• The RFP welcomes proposals from both first-time charter applicants and existing school operators.</li> <li>• The RFP is open to considering diverse educational philosophies and approaches.</li> <li>• The RFP expresses a commitment to serving students with diverse needs.</li> <li>• The district outlines plans to evaluate each application through a thorough review of the written application, a substantive in-person interview with the applicant, and other due diligence to assess the applicant’s capacity to operate a quality charter school.</li> <li>• The RFP recognizes applicant rights and responsibilities. It outlines procedures for promptly notifying charter applicants of approval or denial, and documenting the reasons for the decision.</li> <li>• The RFP outlines parameters for decision-making that grant charters only to applicants that have demonstrated their competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the school, consistent with the stated approval criteria.</li> <li>• The district intends to engage an appropriate combination of internal and external evaluators with relevant educational, organizational, financial, and legal expertise, as well as thorough understanding of the essential principles of charter school accountability and autonomy.</li> <li>• The district outlines a viable plan to provide orientation and training to application evaluators to ensure consistent and fair standards and treatment of applicants.</li> </ul>	

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<p>3.3. The RFP has clearly articulated criteria for evaluating the charter applicant’s proposed mission and vision that are aligned with the purposes of Washington’s charter school law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP requires a mission and vision statement by the charter applicant that identifies the student population and community the school intends to serve, presents a clear, compelling picture of the proposed learning environment and student experience, and sets forth measurable educational goals.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria require that the application as a whole is well-aligned with the focus and priorities identified in the mission and vision statement.</li> </ul>	
<p>3.4. The RFP has clear and rigorous requirements for presenting and criteria for evaluating the applicant’s proposed educational program, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The academic program aligned with state standards;</li> <li>• The proposed instructional design, including the type of learning environment, class size and structure;</li> <li>• Curriculum and teaching methods;</li> <li>• Teaching skills and experience;</li> <li>• Assessments to measure student progress;</li> <li>• School calendar and sample daily schedule;</li> <li>• Discipline policies, including for students with special needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP requires a thorough description of the educational program, including each of the components listed in the evaluation criteria.</li> <li>• The RFP requires a description of the academic program that aligns with state standards.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria assess how well the applicant’s budget is aligned with the proposed educational program for expenses such as instructional materials and supplies.</li> <li>• Evaluation criteria consider the applicant’s proposed use of time to maximize learning, particularly for at-risk students.</li> <li>• Evaluation criteria assess whether discipline policies are aligned with the mission and vision of the proposed charter school and provide for due process guarantees.</li> </ul>	
<p>3.5. The RFP has clear and rigorous requirements for presenting and criteria for evaluating the applicant’s organizational plan, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The legal status of the applicant as required in RCW 28A.710010(1);</li> <li>• The proposed organizational structure of the school;</li> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of the school’s proposed governing board, leadership, management team, and any external organizations;</li> <li>• Staffing plan;</li> <li>• Employment policies, including performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP requires a thorough description of the proposed governance and management structures and systems including an organizational chart that clearly indicates the school’s lines of authority and reporting; a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of the governing board and school leadership and management; staffing plans and recruitment timeline; employment policies; governing bylaws; anticipated partnerships or contractual relationships that are central to the school’s operations or mission; and plans for key operational services such as pupil transportation and food service.</li> <li>• The RFP evaluation criteria assess the viability of the organizational plan and its alignment with the educational program and budget.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria consider whether the plan for professional development is aligned with the skills and competencies that will be needed for effective implementation of the educational program.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria consider the relevance of proposed community</li> </ul>	

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evaluation plans; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student enrollment and recruitment plan;</li> <li>• Plan for parent and community involvement.</li> </ul>	relationships and require evidence of the degree to which asserted relationships have actually been established.	
3.6. The RFP has clear and rigorous requirements for presenting and criteria for evaluating the applicant’s proposed business plan, including but not limited to start-up plan, financial plan and policies, budget and cash-flow projections, and facilities plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RFP requires a sound business plan, including start-up and five-year budgets with clearly explained assumptions; start-up and first-year cash-flow projections with clearly explained assumptions; a description of the insurance coverage the school will obtain; evidence of anticipated fundraising, if claimed in the application; a description of the school’s internal financial controls including audit requirements; and a sound facilities plan, including backup or contingency plans, if appropriate.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria require that budgeted revenues are based on realistic assumptions about state funding and any local funding, private funding, or other resources such as federal start-up funding.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria require that projected expenditures align with the priorities and commitments reflected in the description of the educational program.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria consider whether the proposed financial plan is viable.</li> </ul>	
3.7. The RFP has clear and rigorous requirements for demonstrating, and criteria for evaluating, the applicant’s capacity to implement the proposed program effectively, with particular focus on the capacity of the proposed governing board and school leadership. The evaluation of capacity includes a personal interview with applicants being considered for approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The requirements for evaluating founding group capacity include submission of resumes and bios for proposed governing board members and for identified leadership and management team members.</li> <li>• The RFP requires that applicants disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest for proposed governing board members.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria assess whether governing board members possess the capacities, experience, and skills needed for effective governance of the school.</li> </ul>	
3.8. For applicants that operate one or more charter schools in any state or nation, the RFP provides for review of evidence of the applicant’s past performance.	The RFP requires applicants that operate existing charter schools to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear evidence of their capacity to operate new schools successfully while maintaining quality in existing schools;</li> <li>• Document educational, operational, and financial performance records for existing schools;</li> <li>• Explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed schools;</li> <li>• Present their growth plan, business plan, and most recent financial audits;</li> <li>• Meet high standards of academic, organizational, and financial performance to earn approval for replication.</li> </ul>	

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<b>SECTION IV. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK</b>		
4.1. The draft performance framework meets the requirements for performance frameworks in Washington’s charter schools law, including indicators, measures and metrics for each component enumerated in the law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The academic performance framework appropriately incorporates the state accountability system applicable to all Washington public schools.</li> <li>• The academic performance framework includes indicators, measures, and metrics for: (a) Student academic proficiency; (b) Student academic growth; (c) Achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups; and (d) Graduation rates and postsecondary readiness, for high schools;</li> <li>• The financial performance framework includes indicators related to near-term and long-term performance and sustainability;</li> <li>• The organizational performance framework includes indicators related to compliance with applicable laws, rules, and terms of the charter contract.</li> </ul>	
4.2. The district clearly states any additional, district-selected indicators, measures and metrics of student and school performance it may include in its draft performance framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district provides a clear rationale for additional indicators, measures and metrics, including research-based evidence of their validity and reliability.</li> <li>• Additional metrics are clear, measureable, and attainable.</li> </ul>	
4.3. The district identifies the sources of all data supporting the indicators, measures and metrics included in its draft performance framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district defines the sources of academic data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, including state-mandated and other standardized assessments, student academic growth measures, internal assessments, qualitative reviews, and performance comparisons with other public schools in the district and state.</li> </ul>	
4.4. The draft performance framework requires the disaggregation of all student performance data by major student subgroup as specified in RCW 28A.710.170.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The academic framework requires disaggregation of all student performance data by major student subgroups, such as gender, race and ethnicity, poverty status, special education status, and English language learner status in a manner consistent with the state’s accountability system.</li> </ul>	
4.5. The draft performance framework includes clear, valid and objective criteria for evaluating the financial performance and sustainability of the charter school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial framework defines the sources of financial data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation, grounded in professional standards for sound financial operation and sustainability.</li> <li>• The financial framework enables the authorizer to monitor and evaluate the school’s financial stability and viability based on short-term performance.</li> <li>• The financial framework enables the authorizer to monitor and evaluate the school’s long-term financial stability.</li> </ul>	
4.6. The draft performance framework includes clear, valid and objective criteria for evaluating the organizational performance of the charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organizational framework defines the criteria for organizational performance that will form the basis for ongoing and renewal evaluation, focusing on fulfillment of legal obligations and fiduciary duties.</li> </ul>	

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<p>school, including governance, management and administration, and student and family engagement. The criteria should hold schools accountable for compliance with all applicable law and the terms of the charter contract, while respecting their primary responsibility and authority to manage their day-to-day operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organizational framework articulates the essential elements of the educational program for which the authorizer will hold the school accountable.</li> <li>• The organizational framework defines financial management and oversight standards based on GAAP.</li> <li>• The organizational framework holds the governing board accountable for meeting statutory and board-established operating and reporting requirements.</li> <li>• The organizational framework provides for school compliance with student and employee rights and obligations.</li> <li>• The organizational framework establishes appropriate expectations related to the school environment, including health and safety, transportation, facilities, and handling of records.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SECTION V. RENEWAL, REVOCATION, AND NON-RENEWAL PROCESSES</b></p>		
<p>5.1. The plan illustrates how academic, organizational and financial data, based on the performance framework, will drive decisions whether to renew, revoke, or decline to renew a charter contract.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant district presents a coherent vision for how performance information will be assessed and weighted in making decisions whether to renew, revoke or decline to renew a charter contract.</li> <li>• The plan provides for academic performance to be the highest priority in decisions whether to renew, revoke or decline to renew a charter contract.</li> <li>• The plan provides for revocation of a charter during the charter term in circumstances including, but not necessarily limited to, clear evidence of extreme underperformance or violation of law or the public trust that imperils students or public funds.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.2. The plan articulates a process for continual monitoring and oversight of school performance consistent with the expectations set forth in the charter contract and performance framework, per RCW 28A.710.180, including collecting and analyzing data to support ongoing evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The district has viable plans for monitoring academic performance and identifies valid information sources for measures not addressed in the state accountability system.</li> <li>• The district has viable plans for monitoring financial performance and identifies valid information sources including, but not limited to, annual financial audits.</li> <li>• The district has viable plans for monitoring organizational performance including distinguishing between information that will be self-reported, district-verified, and third-party verified.</li> <li>• The district has a viable plan for reporting on the performance of the charter schools it oversees annually in conformance with RCW 28A.710.100(4).</li> </ul>	
<p>5.3. The plan sets reasonable and effective timelines for actions to renew, revoke or decline to renew a charter contract, including for notification of the charter school board of the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The renewal process accounts for reporting schedules in key areas such as annual audits and state assessments.</li> <li>• The renewal process includes realistic timing for key stages.</li> </ul>	

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<p>prospect of and reasons for revocation or nonrenewal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The renewal and revocation process provides for decision-making on a timeline that is sufficient for orderly closure of schools, including timely notification of parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, and proper disposition of school funds, property and assets.</li> <li>• The revocation process will provide schools with adequate notice and opportunity to respond, including a formal or informal hearing.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.4. The plan identifies corrective actions short of revocation, per RCW 28A.710.180, in response to identified deficiencies in a charter school’s performance, based on the charter contract and the performance framework set forth in the charter contract.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intervention process provides for notification to schools of material violations of the terms of the charter contract and or standards set out in the performance frameworks.</li> <li>• The intervention process provides schools with reasonable opportunities to remedy identified problems.</li> <li>• The intervention process makes clear that the charter school board, not the authorizer, is responsible for correcting identified problems.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.5. There are sound plans for communicating the standards for decisions on renewal, revocation and nonrenewal of charters to the charter school board and leadership during the term of the charter contract, and for providing guidance on the criteria for renewal in the renewal application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contractual basis for renewal, revocation and nonrenewal decisions will be outcomes related to standards set out in the performance frameworks.</li> <li>• The district outlines a plan for communicating the standards annually in the context of annual performance reports.</li> <li>• The district outlines a plan for communicating the standards at the outset of any renewal, revocation or nonrenewal decision.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.6. The plan clearly sets forth how opportunity will be provided for the charter school board to present evidence and submit testimony challenging the stated reasons for revocation or nonrenewal of a charter contract.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonrenewal and revocation processes provide schools an opportunity to submit written testimony and evidence in response to the identified bases for the decision.</li> <li>• Nonrenewal and revocation processes provide schools with a formal or informal hearing at which they have the opportunity to present evidence and submit testimony related to the identified bases for the decision.</li> <li>• Nonrenewal and revocation processes provide an opportunity for the school to present valid, and reliable school-specific indicators to augment external evaluations of the charter school's performance.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.7. The plan considers under what exceptional circumstances a charter contract might be considered for renewal if the charter school’s performance falls in the bottom quartile of schools on the Achievement Index developed by the State Board of Education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan articulates how performance related to mission- or school-specific measures might be considered in the determination of “exceptional circumstances” found justifiable under RCW 28A.710.200(2).</li> <li>• The plan makes a presumption that circumstances are not exceptional and puts the burden of proof on schools for establishing exceptional circumstances.</li> </ul>	