

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

District Reviewer Expertise

Each application for sponsorship shall be reviewed by the District’s application review team (“Review Team”). The Review Team shall be comprised of at least three (3) members/reviewers.

The Review Team may consist of District staff and, if necessary, external sources. Members shall be selected based on their experience with sponsoring community schools and expertise in the following areas of school planning and operations:

1. Education planning;
2. Governance;
3. Finance; and
4. Accountability.

The District shall endeavor to have at least two (2) reviewers with three (3) or more years of experience in sponsoring community schools. The Review Team shall not have a conflict of interest with any applicants. To ensure no conflict of interest exists, each member of the Review Team shall complete a conflict of interest form prior to reviewing each application.

If an application is from a “niche” school (*e.g.* dropout prevention and recovery school, special education school, or an e-school), the District may add an additional reviewer with expertise in the respective niche.

Reviewer Protocols

The District shall develop specific protocols for evaluating applications and shall develop an application rubric. The rubric shall include prescriptive criteria to demonstrate whether: there is clear capacity to operate the school, research data that shows strong market demand for the school, a quality educational program, a solid business plan, and a review of the school’s history that does not raise any continuing issues.

Each reviewer is required to individually score each application and document their rating in accordance with the rubric. To ensure that applications are evaluated consistently, the District shall hold annual training on reviewer protocols each year that the District is eligible to receive applications. Training shall include reviewer calibration. Training shall occur regardless of whether the Board of Education decides to accept applications in a given school year and shall include discussion of the selection criteria, the evaluation process, and the protocols to be followed.

Decision Making

The Review Team shall provide evidence-based recommendations to the Board of Education regarding application decisions. The Review Team shall not recommend an applicant unless (1) the applicant meets the “cut score” of 50%, which shall be the minimum points that an applicant can have to receive a preliminary agreement, (2) the applicant’s school is consistent with the Board of Education’s sponsoring mission, vision, and strategic plan, and (3) the applicant has completed the interview process. Along with its recommendation, the Review Team shall cite to evidence relative to whether the applicant meets each of the specified criteria.

The District, at its sole discretion, may choose not to accept applicants or may reject otherwise qualified applications upon determining that the District does not have capacity or resources to sponsor additional community schools.

Quality Practices Rubric: B.04 Reviewer Expertise; B.05 Reviewer Protocols; B.06 Rigorous Decision-Making

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