Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

INSTRUCTIONS

Evaluators should use this rubric to determine whether renewal of a local charter school's contract will lead to improved academic, organizational, and financial outcomes and whether the school has demonstrated the performance, experience, and capacity necessary to implement its proposed renewal plan successfully. The evaluation should consider the school's performance during its current charter term and determine whether:

- The school has complied with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, including the Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended (O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-2060 through 20-2-2071), and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04 et seq.;
- The proposed academic, organizational, and financial plans remain viable and provide a sound basis for continued operation and improvement;
- The school and its governing board have the experience and demonstrated capacity to implement the proposed renewal plan successfully; and
- Continued operation of the charter school remains in the public interest.

In addition to the criteria listed, evaluators should use their professional judgment to assess charter school quality and capacity. The evaluation should consider the complete body of evidence, including the written renewal petition, governing board capacity interview, response to the initial clarification memo, requests for additional information, academic and operational performance data, financial records and audits, compliance and monitoring findings, site visit observations, and other relevant materials pertinent to the evaluation of the charter school. Importantly, evaluators should assess whether the school has materially satisfied each applicable criterion and has demonstrated the capacity to sustain or improve its performance throughout the proposed renewal term. This means the petition should demonstrate a clear, coherent, and legally sound plan that aligns with applicable laws and best practices—even if minor omissions or misstatements are present.

The evaluation considers both the school's academic, organizational, and financial performance and the governing board's capacity and effectiveness. These are related but distinct dimensions of renewal readiness, and strength in one area should not substitute for material deficiencies in another. Evaluators should assess whether the governing board has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, engagement, and oversight capacity necessary to fulfill its legal and fiduciary responsibilities, hold school leadership accountable, and support the school's continued success and sustainability.

Each section of the rubric includes space to document findings and supporting evidence. Evaluators should establish an initial rating for each section based on the review of the written petition and available documentation. Following the governing board's capacity interview and consideration of any additional information, evaluators should establish a final rating for each section. Written responses should document the evaluators' rationale, including relevant evidence, strengths, concerns, and material deficiencies.

Not all rubric categories or criteria may apply to every renewal petition. Evaluators should complete those criteria applicable to the school's current operations and proposed renewal plan. When a criterion is not applicable, evaluators should indicate that determination and provide an explanation when appropriate.

DeKalb County School District

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

EVALUATION RATINGS

Bulleted criteria define the expectations for how an application and governing board demonstrate that they meet the standard. Evaluators should rate evidence by applying the following guidance:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard *Petition is consistent with a high-quality charter school*	• Evidence is specific, accurate, and multi-faceted, demonstrating that the petition, school leadership and governing board collectively, materially satisfy the criteria. • The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues, adequate preparation, and a clear, realistic plan for school operations, inspiring confidence in the school's capacity to implement its plans effectively. • Any deficiencies are minor or technical and do not indicate critical misalignment with applicable laws, requirements, or the public interest.
Approaches the Standard *Petition is somewhat consistent with a high-quality charter school*	• Evidence demonstrates that the school's actual performance; compliance; proposed academic, organizational, and financial plans; and the experience and capacity of school leadership and the governing board satisfy the criteria in some respects but are insufficient or incomplete in others. • The response demonstrates a general understanding of key issues but lacks sufficient detail, supporting evidence, or clarity in one or more areas, requiring additional information or clarification to establish the school's capacity to implement its plans successfully and sustain operations in the public interest.
Does Not Meet the Standard *Petition is not consistent with a high-quality charter school*	• Evidence is wholly insufficient, significantly lacking, or fails to demonstrate that the school's performance; legal compliance; proposed academic, organizational, and financial plans; or the experience and capacity of school leadership and the governing board satisfy the criteria. • Despite opportunities to provide additional information or clarification, the school has failed to adequately address material deficiencies or demonstrate the viability of its plans and capacity to implement them successfully. • The evidence raises substantial concerns about the school's ability to sustain effective operations and whether continued operation remains in the public interest.

HOLISTIC CRITERIA

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

In addition to the criteria outlined in each section of the rubric, the following qualities should be demonstrated throughout the charter school renewal process, including the written renewal petition, governing board capacity interview, and any subsequent requests for additional information:

- The school's mission, vision, and key educational model design elements are consistently reflected in its actual operations and proposed renewal plan, responsive to the community it serves, and grounded in sound research, proven practices, and/or other evidence supporting their continued effectiveness.
- The governing board demonstrates the capacity, effectiveness, and commitment necessary to provide strong oversight and sustain and improve the school's performance throughout the proposed renewal term.
- The school's financial and operational plans and assurances are viable, comply with applicable legal requirements, and are aligned with its current operations and proposed renewal plan.

1. Organization Information and Minimum Requirements

Category		Criteria
1.1	Petition Completeness and Compliance	• All submission deadlines and requirements were met. • Responses address all application questions, are responsive to the questions asked, adhere to the specified word limits, and are clearly labeled with the corresponding application question number. • The application is submitted as a Microsoft Word document, with narrative responses organized and clearly identified by application question number. • All required exhibits are included, completed as applicable, and identified by page number in the Exhibits List. • Exhibits designated by the OCSC and the District are completed using the templates provided. • All required signatures are provided in the assurances. The assurances are submitted in their original form and have not been altered.

Initial Evaluation			
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:	
Questions:			
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation			
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:			

DeKalb County School District

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

2. Requested Contract Changes

Category		Criteria
2.1	Proposed Changes	• Any proposed changes to the school's mission or innovative features are clearly identified; supported by a sound rationale; and aligned with the school's demonstrated performance, educational model, and the needs of the community it serves. • Proposed changes maintain a coherent and viable educational program and are supported by evidence demonstrating their anticipated effectiveness and contribution to the school's mission. • Any proposed changes to mission-specific goals are clearly defined, measurable, aligned with the school's mission and educational model, and informed by the school's performance during the current charter term. • Any proposed changes to enrollment priorities are clearly explained, responsive to community needs, and consistent with applicable laws and regulations.
2.2	Grade Band	• Any proposed changes in the grade band are clearly identified, and the rationale for the requested changes is supported by student enrollment trends, community needs, and alignment with the school's mission and educational model. • Any proposed changes in the grade band represent a coherent and viable extension of the school's educational program and supports long-term academic, organizational, and district goals. • The school presents viable operational plans for serving additional grade levels, including appropriate staffing, facilities, resources, and timelines for implementation. • The governing board demonstrates the capacity to oversee and support the implementation of the proposed changes while maintaining effective school operations. • The school provides a clear and comprehensive description of the proposed educational program for the additional grade levels, including curriculum, instruction, and assessments. • The proposed program is developmentally appropriate, aligned with the school's mission and educational model, and demonstrates instructional continuity with the existing program while identifying and justifying any necessary differences.

2.3	Maximum Enrollment	• The school clearly identifies its proposed maximum enrollment for the final year of the renewal term. • The school provides a sound rationale for the requested enrollment change; supported by enrollment trends; community needs; and alignment with the school's mission, educational program, and district priorities. • The school presents viable plans for accommodating the proposed enrollment, including necessary staffing, facility, and resource adjustments. • The school demonstrates that its enrollment projections and operational plans are financially sustainable and support continued educational quality and effective operations. • Where applicable, the proposed enrollment is aligned with the school's grade-band expansion and corresponding academic and operational plans.
2.4	Appendix B	• The proposed chart clearly identifies how decision-making authority and responsibilities are allocated among the governing board, school management, the district, and other partners, as applicable. • The allocation of responsibilities preserves the governing board's required decision-making authority over all areas designated by statute, including personnel, finances and resource allocation, curriculum and instruction, school improvement goals, and school operations. • Any proposed additions or deletions of responsibilities are clearly identified, appropriately highlighted, supported by a rationale, and consistent with applicable legal requirements and the school's proposed renewal plan.
2.5	Appendix C	• The school demonstrates an understanding of the district's intent to provide direct federal fund allocations in lieu of District-provided in-kind services and incorporates this arrangement into its proposed budget and financial plans. • The school demonstrates how allocated funds will support its academic, organizational, and operational needs. • The school demonstrates the capacity to manage direct federal fund allocations and secure or independently provide necessary services. • The governing board demonstrates the capacity to oversee the use of allocated funds, maintain appropriate financial controls, and ensure continued access to necessary services.
Initial Evaluation		

DeKalb County School District

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

Area(s) of Strength:	Area(s) of Weakness:
Questions:	
Initial Rating: ☐ Meets the Standard ☐ Approaches the Standard ☐ Does Not Meet the Standard	
Final Evaluation	
Final Rating: ☐ Meets the Standard ☐ Approaches the Standard ☐ Does Not Meet the Standard	
Rating Rationale:	

3. Enrollment Waitlist

Category		Criteria
3.1	Enrollment Waitlist and Planning	• The school accurately reports waitlist numbers by grade level or grade band, as applicable, and demonstrates how this information informs enrollment projections and operational planning for the proposed renewal term. • Waitlist data is current, credible, and supported by lottery records or other relevant documentation.
Initial Evaluation		
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:
Questions:		
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation		
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:		

4. Partnerships

Category		Criteria
4.1	Third-Party Agreements	• The school clearly identifies and describes all current and proposed third-party agreements, including the nature, scope, purpose, and respective roles and responsibilities of each party.

		• Proposed partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations are supported by evidence of commitment, such as letters of intent (LOIs), memoranda of understanding (MOUs), or other documentation. • The school identifies and explains any substantial changes to existing contracts during the proposed renewal term, including the rationale for changes and their anticipated impact on academic, organizational, and financial performance. • Current and proposed contracts and partnerships are financially viable, aligned with the school's mission and educational model, and support its continued academic and operational effectiveness and financial sustainability. • The governing board retains appropriate authority and demonstrates the capacity to oversee third-party relationships, hold providers accountable, and ensure school performance and compliance with applicable laws and contractual obligations.
4.2	Local District Services	• The school clearly identifies and describes all current agreements with the Local Board of Education, including the nature, scope, purpose, and terms of academic or operational services provided. • The school identifies and explains any proposed changes to existing agreements during the renewal term, including the rationale for changes and their anticipated impact on the school's academic, organizational, and financial operations and the district's resources.

Initial Evaluation			
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:	
Questions:			
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation			
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:			

5. Operational or Program Changes

Category	Criteria

5.1	Strategic Rationale and Alignment	• The school clearly identifies and explains all proposed operational changes, including changes to facilities, enrollment priorities, and student services, and provides a sound rationale for each. • Proposed changes are consistent with the school's mission, vision, and educational model; responsive to community needs; and supported by evidence of their anticipated effectiveness.
5.2	Organizational and Operational Capacity	• The governing board demonstrates the capacity to oversee and implement proposed changes, including appropriate planning, accountability, and monitoring. • Proposed changes are financially and operationally viable, comply with applicable legal requirements, and are reflected in the school's renewal plans, budget, and operational assurances.

Initial Evaluation			
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:	
Questions:			
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation			
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:			

6. Performance History

Please Note: To the extent that a school chooses to utilize this opportunity to discuss mitigating factors that may have impacted its performance, the school should discuss only external or dynamic events outside its control. Mitigating factors outside of the school's control include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, acts of terror or war, or other acts or interference by third parties in the school's operation. Any consequences or impact on student achievement, whether direct or indirect, resulting from factors within the control of the school, will not be considered a viable excuse for a school's failure to meet expectations.

Category		**Criteria**
6.1	Academic Performance Standards	• The school provides a clear account of its academic performance against the standards and goals established in its current charter contract for each year of the charter term. • The school identifies academic strengths, areas of underperformance, and performance trends among different student populations, including students with disabilities

		(SWDs), English learners (ELs), and students experiencing academic difficulties. • The school provides relevant and accurate quantitative data, including charts, tables, or graphs, to substantiate its reported academic performance and support its analysis of outcomes. • The school demonstrates the effectiveness of its instructional practices, interventions, and educational supports in addressing the diverse needs and academic outcomes of all students, including SWDs, ELs, and students experiencing academic difficulties. • Where academic goals have not been met, the school identifies and explains the extent and underlying causes of underperformance, including relevant contributing or mitigating factors, supported by evidence. • The school presents specific, measurable strategies to address identified deficiencies, including strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, English learners, and students experiencing academic difficulties, as applicable. Plans include methods for monitoring progress and evaluating effectiveness during the proposed renewal term.
6.2	Organizational Performance Standards	• The school provides a clear and comprehensive account of its organizational performance against the standards and goals established in its current charter contract for each year of the charter term. • The school identifies organizational strengths, areas of underperformance, and significant trends related to governance, leadership, staffing, school operations, and compliance with applicable requirements. • The school provides relevant and accurate supporting documentation and quantitative data, including charts, tables, or graphs, to substantiate its reported organizational performance and demonstrate progress toward contractual goals. • Where organizational goals have not been met, the school identifies and explains the extent and underlying causes of underperformance, including relevant contributing or mitigating factors, supported by evidence. • The school presents specific, measurable strategies to address identified deficiencies, including methods for monitoring progress and evaluating effectiveness during the proposed renewal term.

6.3	Financial Performance Standards	• The school provides a clear and comprehensive account of its financial performance against the standards and goals established in its current charter contract for each year of the charter term. • The school identifies financial strengths, areas of underperformance, and significant trends related to financial management, budget performance, cash flow, and financial sustainability. • The school provides relevant and accurate financial data, including charts, tables, or graphs, to substantiate its reported financial performance and support its analysis of financial trends. • Where financial goals have not been met, the school identifies and explains the extent and underlying causes of underperformance, including relevant contributing or mitigating factors, supported by evidence. • The school presents specific, measurable strategies to address identified financial deficiencies, including methods for monitoring progress and ensuring financial stability throughout the proposed renewal term. • The proposed budget is completed using the required OCSC Budget Template and in accordance with the accompanying instructions. • Additional revenue identified in the budget is supported by documentation demonstrating that the funding has been secured. • Proposed budget expenditures are supported by appropriate documentation, such as vendor quotes, catalog prices, or other evidence used to establish projected costs. • The proposed budget is realistic, internally consistent, and aligned with the school's enrollment projections, academic program, and operational plans.

Initial Evaluation			
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:	
Questions:			
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation			
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:			

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

7. Community Need and Support

Category		Criteria
7.1	Community Need and Support	• The petitioner demonstrates a deep, realistic, and authentic understanding of the "who" (targeted population), the "how" (education model), and the "why" (educational philosophy). • The petitioner describes how members of the community have been involved in the design and will continue to be involved in the implementation of the school. • The community engagement to date and plan for moving forward incorporate diverse stakeholders, touchpoints, and tactics, which are well-suited to reach the school's target population. • The petitioner understands the unique characteristics of DeKalb County's educational landscape and is aware of its communities' needs, assets, and strengths. • The petitioner demonstrates an understanding of the economic, political, historical, and social contexts of the community it seeks to serve. • The petitioner demonstrates that the school will continue to have the necessary community support to carry out its proposed program, especially with regard to building and sustaining community partnerships.
7.2	Distinctive or Unique Instructional Program	• The school offers a unique or distinctive instructional program that addresses an unmet need or provides a meaningful alternative within the district and the community it serves. • The proposed renewal demonstrates continued added value to the district and its students and represents a prudent and responsible investment of limited district resources.

Initial Evaluation			
Area(s) of Strength:		Area(s) of Weakness:	
Questions:			
Initial Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final Evaluation			
Final Rating:	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Rating Rationale:			

Charter School Renewal Petition Evaluation Rubric

School Name:

Date:

Overall Evaluation

After completing all steps of the review process, including the governing board capacity interview, evaluators complete the overall evaluation. Consider all evidence pertinent to the sections above, as well as the holistic criteria.

	Meets the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Written Petition			
Governing Board Capacity			
Overall Evaluation			
Rationale:			