



2015

**New Authorizer Application to Authorize
Charter Schools in Minnesota**

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New Authorizer Application to Authorize Charter Schools in Minnesota

Introduction

A charter school authorizer is a public oversight entity approved by the state to authorize one or more charter schools. An authorizer's fundamental role is to hold a school accountable for the terms of its performance contract – the “charter.” The primary purpose of Minnesota charter schools is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement ([Minn. Stat. § 124D.10, Subd. 1\(a\)](#)). Through effective oversight, authorizers hold charter schools accountable for realizing this purpose.

Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3\(b\)](#), Minnesota authorizers may be public schools, charitable non-profit organizations or institutions of higher education approved by the state to charter schools. Authorizer responsibilities include approving, monitoring, evaluating, renewing, and, if necessary, closing charter schools when contract terms are not met.

Charter school authorizers must be approved by the state. There are currently 26 approved authorizers in Minnesota. [A list of approved authorizers is available on MDE's website.](#)

This document provides guidance to eligible organizations/entities who are interested in becoming an approved charter school authorizer in Minnesota. Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3\(c\)](#), *An eligible authorizer under this subdivision must apply to the commissioner for approval as an authorizer before submitting any affidavit to the commissioner to charter a school. The application for approval as a charter school authorizer must demonstrate the applicant's ability to implement the procedures and satisfy the criteria for chartering a school under this section.*

The authorizer application standards and expectations are aligned with the performance measures, indicators and specifications in the Minnesota Authorizer Performance Evaluation System (MAPES). MAPES was developed per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3\(h\)](#), to review an authorizer's performance every five (5) years.

New Authorizer Application Review Timeline and Process

Following are the key stages and dates in the 2015 authorizer application review process.

Stage	Date
Request for Proposals Release	Wednesday, July 1, 2015
New Authorizer Application Instructions Information Session	Meeting: 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Central Standard Time on Tuesday, July 21, 2015 Location: Conference Center A, Room CC 1 and 2 Please RSVP by Friday, July 17, 2015
Applicant Information Webinar –Check in on progress and answer questions	Webinar: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on Friday, August 7, 2015 Please RSVP by Tuesday, August 4, 2015
Intent to Apply Notice due to MDE	Monday, July 27, 2015
Proposals Due/Application Deadline	4:30 p .m. Central Standard Time on Friday, August 21, 2015
Applicant Interviews	Middle of September
Initial Approval/Disapproval Decisions and Notifications	No later than Monday, October 5, 2015
Submission to Demonstrate Satisfactory Remedy of Deficiencies	No later than Tuesday, November 3, 2015
Final Decisions	No later than Wednesday, November 25, 2015

Applicant Orientation/Information Session

Applicants who are interested in learning more about the *Request for Proposals: Application to Receive Approval as an Authorizer of Minnesota Charter Schools*, are encouraged to contact mde.charterschools@state.mn.us by **Friday, July 17, 2015** to register for MDE’s application orientation/information session. The in-person meeting will take place on **Tuesday, July 21, 2015** from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Central Standard Time at MDE.

Applicant Information Webinar

A follow-up webinar will be available to applicants who have additional questions as they complete the *Request for Proposals: Application to Receive Approval as an Authorizer of Minnesota Charter Schools*. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact mde.charterschools@state.mn.us by **Tuesday, August 4, 2015** to register for the webinar. The webinar will take place on **Friday, August 7, 2015** from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Central Standard Time. Webinar login information will be emailed to preregistered applicants prior to the meeting.

Intent to Apply Notice

In order to determine an appropriate number of reviewers and secure sufficient space for applicant interviews, an Intent to Apply Notice (see Attachment) is due to MDE by **Monday, July 27, 2015**. Each applicant must submit *Intent to Apply Notice* via email to mde.charterschools@state.mn.us. Please use the form provided in this instruction document.

New Authorizer Application Instructions

The applicant provides a narrative response for each measure in Part A and Part B. The narrative response should clearly respond to the guiding question(s) and essential element(s) of the measure. The narrative should include measure headings to organize the response. If additional information is attached to further address the measure, the narrative should clearly identify the attachment and reference the page(s), section, etc. where the information is located.

Definitions:

Measure: Indicates title of measure and provides a guiding statement; the measures align with MAPES's performance measures.

Essential Element(s): Should be clearly addressed in response to the guiding statement(s).

Advanced Element(s) (optional): Shows applicant is addressing high-quality authorizing standards and striving for commendable and exemplary status in MAPES; should be clearly addressed in response to measure.

Part A Measures: Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure

The purpose of Part A is to provide the applicant an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity and commitment to further the purposes of [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10](#). This portion of the application directly aligns with Part A performance measures in MAPES.

Provide a narrative for each Part A measure and include attachments, when applicable, that address the applicant's mission and vision and capacity and infrastructure.

Measure A.1 - Authorizer Mission: *The applicant has a clear and compelling mission for charter school authorizing.*

Essential Elements:

- The mission is stated and fully aligns with Minnesota charter school law.
- The response includes a description of how the process of chartering schools is a way for the organization to carry out its mission.

Measure A.2 - Authorizer Vision and Organizational Goals: *The applicant has a comprehensive vision for charter school authorizing with clear organizational goals and time frames for achievement that are aligned with the purposes of Minnesota law.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant's vision addresses, with specificity, the desired characteristics of the schools it will charter.
- The applicant's vision includes organization-specific purposes, if applicable.
- The applicant's organizational goals aligns with chartering vision and statutory purpose(s) per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1\(a\)](#).
- The organizational goals are measurable.

Measure A.3 – Authorizer Structure of Operations: *The applicant has a clear structure of duties and responsibilities and sufficient resources to effectively oversee its portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- Description of the capacity of the organization to serve as an authorizer, including the positions (e.g., employees, contractors, volunteers; both paid and unpaid positions) who will perform the authorizing duties and ratio of positions (FTE) to portfolio size.
- The applicant describes a clear structure of duties and responsibilities which is reflected in job descriptions and an organizational chart that shows clear lines of reporting and authority/decision-making and is at a level adequate to meet the needs of the portfolio of schools and, if applicable, showing projected organizational changes due to proposed expansion over the five-year term.
- The applicant describes how the organization will manage and safeguard information and records related to authorizing.

Measure A.4 - Authorizer Staff Expertise: *The applicant has appropriate experience, expertise and skills to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of charter schools.*

Definitions:

- **Expertise** is defined as having knowledge, education, training, etc. in the areas of charter schools, curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance and law.
- **Experience** is defined as length of time working in the areas of charter schools, curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance and law.
- **Skills** is defined as effective application of experience and expertise in the areas of charter schools, curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance and law.

Essential Elements:

- The applicant identifies those currently involved in the application to become an approved authorizer, what each person's role is currently, including required expertise, experience and skills in curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance and law in charter schools, and what each person's role will be if application is approved. Each person noted on the *Applicant Contracts – Form 3* must be addressed in this measure.
- The applicant describes anticipated roles of the authorizing staff with qualifications that address curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance, and law in charter schools.
- Resumes of individuals involved in the development of this application. Each should identify all schools, local education agencies (LEAs), state education agencies (SEAs), etc., with which the individual(s) has/have been associated/affiliated. Each person noted on the *Applicant Contracts – Form 3* must be addressed in this attachment.

Measure A.5 - Authorizer Capacity and Skill Development of Leadership and Authorizing Staff: *The applicant has a plan to build the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development. The applicant has a plan to provide professional development aligned with its operations, vision and goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements

- The applicant describes a plan to offer professional development to authorizing leadership and staff.
- The applicant describes the frequency and nature of potential professional development as well as personnel expected to attend.
- The applicant describes how the professional development aligns with its operations, vision and goals for the portfolio of charter schools.

Measure A.6 - Authorizer Operational Budget for Authorizing the Portfolio of Charter Schools: *The applicant has a plan to allocate resources commensurate with its stated budget, needs and responsibilities of authorizing the portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- Anticipated five-year budget (January 1, 2016 – December 30, 2020) outlining the following:

- Anticipated revenue sources such as fees collected annually from schools and additional funds from outside sources.
- Anticipated expenditures such as staff, travel, consultants and office costs.
- Anticipated authorizer staff increases in relation to portfolio growth.
- The budget projects the number and size of schools in the portfolio.

Important note: this establishes the maximum portfolio size for the authorizer's five-year term.

Advanced Element:

- The applicant describes how its budget shows resource allocations are devoted to achieve nationally recognized quality authorizing standards.

Measure A.7 - Authorizer Operational Conflicts of Interest: *The applicant implements a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- Clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.
- The applicant describes how the policy will be implemented (forms, process, etc.) in order to avoid conflicts of interest that might affect the authorizer's capacity to make objective, merit-based application and renewal decisions, including avoiding decisions and interventions that hold the authorizer accountable for the school's performance.

Measure A.8 - Ensuring Autonomy of the Schools in the Portfolio: *The applicant implements a policy to preserve and support the essential autonomies of the portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes a clear policy to ensure school autonomy.
- The applicant describes processes and procedures for implementing and executing school autonomy.
- The applicant describes a focus on holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than on processes.

Advanced Element:

- The applicant describes how its policy to ensure school autonomy aligns with nationally recognized quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure A.9 - Authorizer Self-Evaluation of Capacity, Infrastructure and Practices: *The applicant plans to self-evaluate its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes a plan to regularly review its internal ability to oversee the portfolio of charter schools.
- The applicant describes the organization's process to implement continuous improvement plans which will result in more effective authorizing practices.

Advanced Elements:

- The applicant describes the process the organization will use to evaluate its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure and practices) regularly against its mission, vision and goals.
- The applicant describes the organization's frameworks for addressing any needs for improvement when falling short of its mission, organizational goals or strategic plan.

Measure A.10 - Authorizer High-Quality Authorizing Dissemination: *The applicant plans to disseminate best authorizing practices and/or assist other authorizers in high-quality authorizing.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes the organization's process to share best practices and/or provide assistance to other authorizers.
- The applicant describes the organization's intent to engage with other professionals (such as state or national associations) in order to promote high-quality authorizing dissemination.

Measure A.11 - Authorizer Compliance to Responsibilities Stated in Statute: *The applicant intends to comply with reporting, submissions and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statute.*

Essential Element:

- The applicant describes its internal process which will ensure that it will comply with reporting, submissions and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statute.

Part B Measures: Authorizer Processes and Decision Making

The purpose of Part B is for the applicant to describe its standards, practices and processes for determining high stakes decisions regarding a school's academic, operation and financial performance. This portion of the application directly aligns with Part B performance measures in MAPES.

Provide a narrative for each Part B measure and include attachments that address the applicant's plans for charter school decision making, contracting and oversight, performance-based accountability and autonomy.

Measure B.1 - New Charter School Decisions: *The applicant has clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals. The applicant outlines new charter school decision-making processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- Comprehensive new school application instructions, evaluative criteria, procedures, timelines and review process that address all the following elements:
 - Mission/Vision.
 - Need/Demand.
 - Primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1](#)) and how the school will report the implementation of it to the authorizer.
 - Additional purpose(s) and how the school will report the implementation of said purpose(s) to the authorizer.
 - Program designed for students to meet or exceed the outcome expectations adopted by the commissioner for public school students ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#)).
 - Academic plan: description of the school program, specific academic and nonacademic outcomes that students must achieve, educational philosophy and approach, school culture, curriculum and instruction, assessment and services for special populations.
 - Operational plan: governance and management, administration, human resource recruitment and development, student recruitment and enrollment, admission policy, school calendar, parent and community involvement, operational outcomes and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
 - Financial plan: short- and long-term financial projections, budget(s), business management procedures, financial outcomes and facility planning.
- Review process includes clear and transparent procedures and rigorous criteria to evaluate new charter school applications.
- The applicant describes the timeline of the new school application process consistent with statutory deadlines per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 4](#).
- The applicant's new charter school application criteria is consistent with the authorizer's performance standards/framework as described in *B.4: Performance Standards*.

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its new charter school application process is designed to promote high-quality charter schools and align with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.2 - Interim Accountability Decisions (i.e., site/grade level expansions, official early learning program(s) recognition, ready to open and change in authorizer): *The applicant has clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate school opening decisions as well as proposals of existing charter school expansion requests and interim changes. The applicant outlines interim accountability decision-making processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools.*

Essential Element:

- Comprehensive application instructions, evaluative criteria, procedures, timelines and review processes, including academic, operational and financial conditions upon which they approve or deny the following:
 - Site/grade level expansion per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 4\(j\) and \(k\)](#).
 - Official early learning program(s) recognition per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 8\(f\)](#) and [Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.16 to 121A.19](#).
 - Change in authorizer requests per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 23\(c\)](#).
 - Ready to Open per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 4\(c\)](#).

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its interim accountability decision-making processes are designed to promote high-quality charter schools and align with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.3 - Contract Term, Negotiation and Execution: *The applicant has contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer.*

Essential Elements:

- Sample charter contract (See [Charter Contract Guidance](#) on the MDE website) that meets all following elements:
 - **All** current statutory requirements per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 6](#).
 - Clearly state the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer.
- The applicant describes a plan to establish contract outcomes that are strategic, specific, measurable and time-bound.
- The applicant describes its process for how its new contract(s) will be completed within 45 business days of the commissioner's approval of the authorizer's affidavit and the authorizer will submit to the commissioner a copy of the signed contract within 10 business days of its execution.
- The applicant describes how its existing contract(s) will be fully executed no later than the first date of the renewal period.
- The applicant describes how the contract will be amended for material contract changes when applicable.

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its contract term, negotiation and execution decision-making processes are designed to promote high-quality charter schools and align with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.4 - Performance Standards: *The applicant has a performance framework under which it executes contracts with clear, measurable and attainable performance standards.*

Essential Elements:

- Performance framework addressing all the following elements:
 - States 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 [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1 and Subdivisions 6\(1\) and 6\(2\)](#).
 - The performance framework defines clear, measurable and attainable academic, operational and financial performance standards for all schools in its portfolio per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 6](#).
 - The performance framework is designed to achieve outcomes that meet or exceed expectations adopted by the commissioner for public school students per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#).
 - Commissioner's outcomes for public school students are the five goals of World's Best Workforce:
 - All children are ready for school.
 - All third-graders can read at grade level.
 - All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
 - All students are ready for career and college.
 - All students graduate from high school.

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its performance framework is designed to promote high-quality charter schools and aligns with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.5 - Authorizer's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio Charter Schools: *The applicant has processes to monitor and oversee the schools in its portfolio in the areas of academic, operational and financial performance.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes the criteria processes and procedures it will use to monitor and evaluate the fiscal, operational and academic performance of the schools in its portfolio per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 6\(7\)](#).
- The applicant describes required academic, financial and operational reporting by the schools to the authorizer.
- The applicant describes an oversight plan that clearly establishes the criteria, processes and procedures that the authorizer will use to evaluate performance and monitor compliance, ensure school autonomy and protect student rights.
- The applicant describes how its ongoing oversight informs its standards and processes for intervention, termination and renewal decisions of the portfolio of charter schools (i.e., performance measures B.6 and B.9).

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its ongoing oversight of the portfolio of charter schools is designed to promote high-quality charter schools and aligns with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.6 - Authorizer's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action and Response to Complaints: *The applicant has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, interventions and/or corrective action.*

Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes standards, procedures and processes to address and resolve complaints, including forms if applicable.
- The applicant describes standards, procedures and processes for intervention and a plan for implementing corrective action.
- The applicant describes how its standards and processes for intervention, corrective action and response to complaints align with its ongoing oversight of the portfolio of charter schools (i.e., performance measure B.5).

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its standards and processes for interventions, corrective action and response to complaints are designed to promote high-quality charter schools and align with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Measure B.7 - Charter School Support, Development and Technical Assistance: *The applicant has an established process to support its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings.*

Essential Element:

- The applicant describes its plan to provide support and technical assistance and in a manner to preserve school autonomy

Measure B.8 – High-Quality Charter School Replication and Dissemination of Best School Practices: *The authorizer has an established process to promote, within its portfolio, the model replication and dissemination of best practices of high performing charter schools.*

Essential Element:

- The authorizer describes a clear plan for successful model replication and dissemination of best practices.

Measure B.9 - Charter School Renewal or Termination Decisions: *The applicant has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions. The applicant outlines charter school renewal and termination decision standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools.*

Essential Elements:

- Comprehensive evaluative standards, procedures, timelines and review processes to evaluate a school's academic, operational and financial performance for high-stakes renewal and termination decisions consistent with [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivisions 6\(7\), 6\(8\), 6\(13\), 6\(14\) and Subdivision 15\(a\) and includes the following:](#)
 - Standards and process to evaluate the school's performance in meeting or exceeding outcomes adopted by the commissioner for public school students ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#)).
 - Standards and process to issue a formal written performance evaluation of the school's contract outcomes to determine eligibility for contract renewal per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 6\(8\)](#).
 - The applicant describes clear standards and consequences for meeting or not meeting performance standards.
- School closure plan and describes its role in the orderly closure of a school in the event of revocation, non-renewal or voluntary relinquishment of the charter per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 6\(15\), Subdivision 23 and Subdivision 24](#).

Advanced Element:

- The applicant identifies how its charter school renewal or termination decision-making processes are designed to promote high-quality charter schools and align with national quality authorizing principles and standards.

Application Submission Instructions

Application submissions are to be submitted via hard copy. It is important the applicant submits materials as PDF documents in an organized fashion including page numbers. **Please do not send unsolicited amendments to the application following its initial submission.** Structure your submission as follows:

Authorizer Eligibility Certification – Cover Page Form 1
Assurances – Form 2
Authorizer Contacts – Form 3
Part A: Narrative responding to each performance measure (A.1 - A.11) as one PDF
Part B: Narrative responding to each performance measure (B.1 - B.9) as one PDF
Attachments clearly labeled with titles that are specific to the document (e.g., Charter School Manual) as separate PDFs

The applicant must submit a total of six (6) hard copies of the application to MDE:

- One (1) original, unbound single-sided copy; and
- Five (5) double-sided (back-to-back) copies.

Where to Submit the Application

MDE must receive all complete applications by **Friday, August 21, 2015**. Options for submitting applications:

- Applications may be dropped off at MDE by 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time; or
- If mailing, overnight delivery or next day delivery, applications must be received at MDE (not postmarked) by **August 21, 2015**.

Submit to: Minnesota Department of Education
Attn: Jodi Brenden Amir, Charter Center
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Disposition of Responses

Once an application is received, MDE may release to the public the name and mailing address of the applicant. All materials submitted in response to this request for proposals will become property of the State of Minnesota and will become public record in accordance with [Minnesota Statutes, section 13](#), after the evaluation process is completed.

Completion of the evaluation process occurs when the commissioner has notified every authorizer applicant of final approval or disapproval. If the responder submits information in response to this request for proposals that it believes to be trade secret materials as defined by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, [Minnesota Statutes, section 13.37](#), the responder must:

- Clearly mark all trade secret materials in its response at the time the response is submitted;
- Include a statement justifying the trade secret designation for each item; and
- Defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be a trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless the state, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the state in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that

defense. This indemnification survives the state’s award of a contract. In submitting a response to this request for proposals, the responder agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of the state.

Applicant Interview

The communication and implementation of the applicant’s proposed practices are of vital importance to charter school authorizing. Following the desk review of Parts A and B, reviewers will generate interview questions to reflect points of interest, areas for clarification, or concerns that emerged from the review process. Individuals relevant to the organization’s authorizing duties will be interviewed. The interview is limited to five participants and will be conducted at MDE.

The purpose of the applicant interview is to gain clarity on questions or concerns that arise from the review of the application. In addition, it provides an opportunity for the applicant to clearly articulate the overall authorizing plan, including the philosophy, policies, processes and short- and long-term plans.

Evaluation Criteria

This portion of the application evaluates the applicant’s **understanding of and ability to clearly articulate** the proposed authorizing plans. This includes displaying clarity and comprehension as well as a commitment to becoming an effective authorizer.

- **Clarity:** The applicant’s responses are precise, effective, thoughtful and direct.
- **Comprehension:** The applicant is well-informed and demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the written application.
- **Commitment:** The applicant conveys a genuine interest and commitment to becoming an effective authorizer.

New Authorizer Approval Process and Rating Scale

The authorizer approval process is designed to assess how well an applicant proposes to fulfill the role of a charter school authorizer, based on the requirements set out in [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10](#) (Charter Schools). Each element of the authorizer application directly aligns with the performance measures of MAPES.

Reviewers will evaluate authorizer applications according to the same rating scale in MAPES to evaluate existing authorizers at their five year benchmark. The scale allows for specificity, differentiation of performance, and precision in identifying strengths and weaknesses of proposed authorizer practices. ***Please note that, in order to be an approved authorizer, an applicant must receive a satisfactory rating or higher on all rubric items.***

4	Exemplary	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND does an exceptional job of meeting MDE’s standards for quality authorizing. Warrants notice from, and emulation by, other authorizers.
3	Commendable	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND exceeds standards in meeting MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.
2	Satisfactory	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND meets minimum standards of MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.
1	Approaching satisfactory	Content does not meet the minimum statutory requirements OR improvement is needed in order to meet MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.
0	Unsatisfactory or Incomplete	Content is either lacking altogether or falls well below the minimum statutory requirements for authorizing AND/OR MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.

Initial Approval/Disapproval Decisions and Notifications

Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3\(c\)](#), “The commissioner must approve or disapprove an application within 45 business days of the application deadline. If the commissioner disapproves the application, the commissioner must notify the applicant of the specific deficiencies in writing.” The commissioner will make initial application decisions no later than **Monday, October 5, 2015**.

Submission to Demonstrate Satisfactory Remedy of Deficiencies

If an application is initially disapproved, the commissioner’s notice will include reviewer feedback identifying any content that has been reviewed and determined to be unsatisfactory. Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3\(c\)](#), “if the commissioner disapproves the application, the commissioner must notify the applicant of the specific deficiencies in writing and the applicant then has 20 business days to address the deficiencies to the commissioner’s satisfaction. After the 20 business days expire, the commissioner has 15 business days to make a final decision to approve or disapprove the application.” If the application is initially denied, the applicant’s response to deficiencies is due to MDE no later than twenty (20) business days after the commissioner’s notice of deficiency.

Final Decisions

Once an applicant’s response to deficiencies is received, the commissioner has 15 business days to make a final decision. Per Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3(c), “Failing to address the deficiencies to the commissioner’s satisfaction makes an applicant ineligible to be an authorizer.”

Approval - An approval by the commissioner means that MDE has found that the application meets the statutory requirements for authorizing and MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.

Disapproval - A disapproval by the commissioner means that MDE has found that, in whole or in part, the application, including proposed practices, does not meet the statutory requirements for authorizing and/or MDE’s standards for quality authorizing.

Intent to Apply Notice



Instructions: In order to determine an appropriate number of reviewers and secure sufficient space for applicant interviews, MDE respectfully requests all applicants submit this Intent to Apply Notice to mde.charterschools@state.mn.us by **July 27, 2015**.

Name of Organization (intended applicant):	
Name of Applicant's Primary Contact:	
Applicant's Primary Contact Information <i>(include email, mailing address and phone number):</i>	
<p>Type of Organization <i>(Check the appropriate boxes below):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Independent school district school board. <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate school district school board. <input type="checkbox"/> Education district organized under sections 123A.15 to 123A.19. <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. <input type="checkbox"/> Institution of higher education - check the authorizer category the organization meets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota private college that grants two- or four-year degrees and is registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education under chapter 136A. <input type="checkbox"/> Community college, state university, or technical college, governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. <input type="checkbox"/> University of Minnesota. <input type="checkbox"/> Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, Exchanges – a nonprofit corporation subject to chapter 317A, described in section 317A.905, and exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)6 of the Internal Revenue Code may authorize one or more charter schools if the charter school has operated for at least three years under a different authorizer and if the nonprofit corporation has existed for at least 25 years. <input type="checkbox"/> Single Purpose Authorizer - check the authorizer category the organization meets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable, nonsectarian organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 317A as a corporation with no members. <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 322B.975 as a nonprofit limited liability company for the sole purpose of chartering schools. <p>Please note: <i>Single purpose authorizers "shall consider and approve applications using the criteria provided in subdivision 4 and shall not limit the applications it solicits, considers, or approves to any single curriculum, learning program, or method" (Minn. Stat., § 124D.10, Subd. 3(b)(5)).</i></p>	

**Important Note: Documents requested in this form are to be dated within one year of the date the applicant submits this request.*

Name of Organization (intended applicant):	
Name of Applicant's Primary Contact:	
Applicant's Primary Contact Information (include email, mailing address and phone number):	

Check the appropriate box (Minn. Stat § 124D.10, Subd. 3(b)):

Independent school district school board, intermediate school district board, or education district organized under Minnesota Statutes, sections 123A.15 to 123A.19.

Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (exclusions apply; see Minn. Stat § 124D.10, Subd. 3(b) for complete information.)

Include the following documentation immediately after this form; clearly label each attachment:

Attachment A: Documentation of the applicant's *current* status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. TIP: Search the [IRS website](#), print results screen with date.

Attachment B: Documentation to evidence the applicant's *current* membership with the [Minnesota Council of Nonprofits](#) or the [Minnesota Council on Foundations](#) (membership must be active when the affidavit is submitted).

Attachment C: Documentation of the applicant's "active" registration with the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General when the affidavit is submitted to MDE. TIP: Search the [Attorney General's website](#), print results screen with date.

Attachment D: Documentation to evidence the organization has been incorporated in the state of Minnesota and has been operating continuously as a nonprofit for at least five years from the date of affidavit submission. TIP: Search the [Minnesota Business and Lien System](#) on the Minnesota Secretary of State's website, print results screen with date.

Attachment E: Documentation to verify the organization does not operate a charter school. TIP: Include a signed letter, on organizational letterhead, to verify this requirement.

Institution of higher education; check the authorizer category the organization meets:

Minnesota private college that grants two- or four-year degrees and is registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education under Minnesota Statutes, section 136A;

Community college, state university, or technical college, governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; or

The University of Minnesota.

Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, Exchanges – a nonprofit corporation subject to chapter 317A, described in section 317A.905, and exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, may authorize one or more charter schools if the charter school has operated for at least three years under a different authorizer and if the nonprofit corporation has existed for at least 25 years.

Include the following documentation immediately after this form; clearly label each attachment:

Attachment A: Documentation of the applicant's *current* status under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. TIP: Search the [IRS website](#), print results screen with date.

Attachment B: Documentation to evidence the organization has been incorporated in the state of Minnesota and has been operating continuously as a nonprofit for at least 25 years from the date of affidavit submission. TIP: Search the [Minnesota Business and Lien System](#) on the Minnesota Secretary of State's website, print results screen with date.

Single Purpose Authorizer (Check the authorizer category the organization meets below):

Charitable, nonsectarian organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 317A as a corporation with no members.

Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 322B.975 as a nonprofit limited liability company for the sole purpose of chartering schools.

Include the following documentation immediately after this form; clearly label each attachment:

Attachment A: Documentation of the applicant's *current* status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. TIP: Search the [IRS website](#), print results screen with date.

Attachment B: Documentation of the applicant's "active" registration with the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General when the affidavit is submitted to MDE. TIP: Search the [Attorney General's website](#), print results screen with date.

Assurances – Form 2

Name of Organization (intended applicant):	
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LEGALLY BINDING

By signing this form, I/we acknowledge that I/we am/are aware of authorizer responsibilities in their entirety as stated within the application materials and shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations and provisions stated therein should the organization be approved to authorize charter schools in Minnesota. I/we hereby assure and agree to comply with all conditions of the approved application and submit required documents and certifications as required should the organization be approved as an authorizer.

IDENTIFIED OFFICIAL WITH AUTHORITY

NAME AND TITLE

SIGNATURE *(person with authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the organization)*

DATE

ORGANIZATION'S PRIMARY AUTHORIZING CONTACT *(if different from above)*

NAME AND TITLE

SIGNATURE

DATE

