

CHARTER AUTHORIZERS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: STRATEGIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

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ENTRY TASK

At your table, please reflect and then share your responses to the following:

Does your New School Application/Request for Proposal contain expectations regarding community engagement, involvement and/or parent engagement?

If so, why?

GOALS OF THE SESSION

- Deepen your understanding of the importance of parent and community engagement in high-quality charter schools
- Understand how community engagement is included in the work of the Chicago Public Schools, Washington State Charter School Commission, and your fellow attendees' authorizing offices
- Acquire tools and resources related to community engagement to reference and implement
- Consider challenging questions that continue to impact your community engagement strategy

WASHINGTON STATE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

- Washington state's only state-wide authorizer
- Independent state agency
- Established in April 2014 and Re-established in April 2016
- 11 member Commission (9 appointed, 2 designated)
- 10 Schools Authorized with 8 in operation

WASHINGTON STATE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Mission

To authorize high-quality public charter schools and provide effective oversight and transparent accountability to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students

Vision

Foster innovation and ensure excellence so that every student has access to and thrives in a high-quality public school

Values

Student-Centered

Cultural and Community Responsiveness

Excellence and Continuous Learning

Accountability / Responsibility

Transparency

Innovation

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CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

- How does the Commission live through this value?
 - New School Application
 - Public Forum
 - Performance Framework
 - Organizational and Financial Performance
 - Renewal Criteria

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

- New School Application
 - Entire Section focused on Family and Community Involvement
 - What specific role have parents and community played in the development of the school?
 - Evidence of demand for school?
 - Culturally inclusive?
 - Plan for ongoing family-school partnerships
 - Existing and anticipated partnerships

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

- New School Application
 - Public Forum
 - RCW 28A.710.140 (2): The application review process must include thorough evaluation of each application, an in-person interview with the applicant group, and an opportunity to learn about and provide input on each application in a **public forum** including, without limitation, parents, community members, local residents, and school district board members and staff.
 - Develop and distribute a Public Forum protocol

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS: OFFICE OF INNOVATION AND INCUBATION

The mission of the Office of Innovation & Incubation is to provide students with access to high quality and innovative education through incubation of quality schools, accountability and high quality oversight.

I&I authorizes schools via its annual request for proposal process, reauthorizes schools via its annual renewal process and allows for changes to charter school agreement mid term through its application for amendment.

I&I strives to execute rigorous authorization processes that lead to an improved portfolio of schools.

Community engagement is key!

ILLINOIS CHARTER SCHOOL LAW (105 ILCS 5/27A)

- Its declaration: “To encourage parental and community involvement with public schools.”
- The proposal: “A description of the governance and operation of the charter school, including the nature and the extent of parental, professional educator and community involvement in the governance and operation of a charter school.”
- The evaluation: “...the local school board and the Commission shall give preference to proposals that demonstrate a high level of local pupil, parental, community, business, and school personnel support.”
- 45 day requirement: “Within 45 days of receipt of a charter school proposal, the local school board shall convene a public meeting to obtain information to assist the board in its decision to grant or deny a charter school proposal.”

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS

Application: Domain 1: Parent and Community Engagement and Support

3 sections with 9 sub-sections designed to ensure the applicant has garnered authentic parent and community support and demonstrated a true demand for the proposed school. This includes an understanding of community, stakeholder engagement (supporters and opposition), and notification, an assessment of canvassing and engagement efforts, and letters of support including at least 50% intent to apply for proposed first year enrollment.

Community Forum: An applicant led community forum to demonstrate community support and engagement, as well as an assessment of opposition. The authorizer is present at this forum.

Public Hearing: Within 30 days of the proposed board vote, a public hearing is conducted by the authorizer to formally receive public comment from applicants and any stakeholder in support or in opposition to any and all new school proposals.

TABLE TOP DISCUSSION

At your table, please reflect and then share your responses to the following:

Is it important to assess community engagement once a school is authorized?

If so, what are your strategies for assessing community engagement?

How is this information used in your authorization/reauthorization practices?

APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT

Application: Assessment of student and family engagement (notification, support and involvement) with proposed changes, and notifications to dignitaries.

Community Public Hearing: Major proposed changes (such a facility relocation) also require school to conduct a community public hearing. There is an advertising requirement and the hearing is open to the public. The school is required to present the proposed change and receive public comment (in support or in opposition to) the proposed amendment.

Public Hearing: Within 30 days of the proposed board vote, a public hearing is conducted by the authorizer to formally receive public comment from schools and any stakeholder in support or in opposition to any and all proposed amendments.

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

- Performance Framework
 - Organizational Framework
 - Recurrent Enrollment
 - Mission-Specific Organizational Goals
 - Financial Framework
 - Enrollment Variance (Informational)

SCHOOL RENEWAL

Ongoing Assessment: Transparency and compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act.
Understanding of operator interactions with engaging parent voice and addressing concerns.

Public Hearing: Within 30 days of the proposed board vote, a public hearing is conducted by the authorizer to formally receive public comment from schools and any stakeholder in support or in opposition to any and all renewal applications.

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

- Renewal Criteria
 - Performance Assessment
 - Additional Criteria???



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

