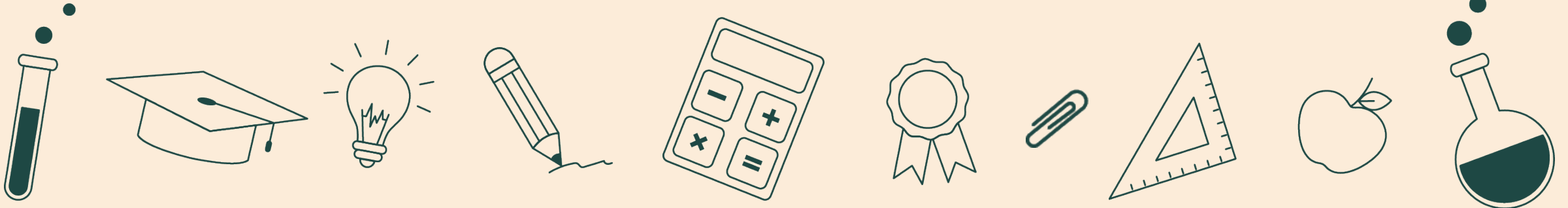




The Petitioner's Guide to Pre-Opening Expectations

Kristen Easterbrook, Director of Charter Development



Vision

Innovative and superior charter schools advancing education in every community.

Mission

The mission of the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia is to improve public education by authorizing high-quality charter schools that provide students with better educational opportunities than they would otherwise receive in traditional district schools.



Presentation Overview

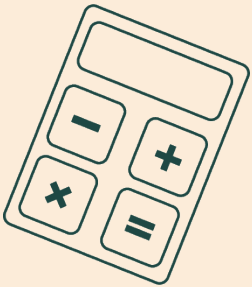


- Facilities
- Community Engagement and Enrollment
- Funding and Support
- Pre-Opening Team Capacity



Facilities- When?

- Every petitioning group should have a facility timeline approved by the board.
 - The timeline should include major events and compliance deadlines.
 - Where can you find state compliance deadlines, rules, and laws?
 - [SCSC website](#)
 - [GADOE website](#)
 - Petitioning groups should have already begun working on identify a facility at the time of petition submission and capacity interview.
 - The facility selection process can be very time consuming during the pre-opening year, so petitioners are encouraged to begin this work prior to submitting their application.



Facilities- Where?



- The location of the main and alternative facility sites should be included in the petition application.
 - Does the proposed site match the school's mission and proposed academic plan?
 - Can the proposed site accommodate your projected enrollment?
 - Can any of your potential sites be excluded from consideration due to being potentially non-compliant with state or local laws?
 - [GADOE Facility Requirements](#)

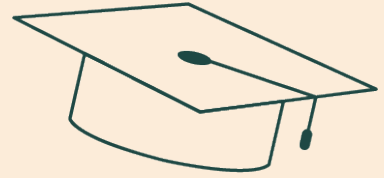


Facilities- How?

- **How will the school acquire the facility?**
 - Lease
 - Purchase
 - Donation
- **Will the facility require construction or renovation?**
 - Are these costs included in the budget?
- **Will the school use a lender to finance the facility?**
 - Always have a backup!
 - This will impact the school's CPF score.
- **Budget Considerations**
 - New schools typically have a higher facility cost than established schools
 - Efficiencies of scale develop as you grow
 - Hidden costs
- **Be aware of local regulations**
 - Building codes/ADA
 - Zoning
 - Certificate of Occupancy
- **Be aware of GaDOE Facility Requirements**



Facilities- Why?



- The petitioner should be able to clearly explain the facility plan in both the petition and capacity interview.
- Why is the current plan superior to alternative strategies?
- Has the school done a cost-benefit analysis?
- Does the school's location meet the needs of the anticipated student population?
 - Petitioners should be prepared to address how students will get to the school (ex. transportation plans, available public transit, proximity to major thoroughfares or employers in the area)



Facilities- Who?

- Each petitioning group should have a committee or board member to lead the facility efforts.
 - Having a board member with real estate experience is a best practice.
- Petitioners should be prepared to address questions related to the board's role in the facility selection process.
- The Facility Service Unit (FSU) at GADOE is there to answer your questions (after you have viewed their website).
 - [FSU Website](#)



Community Engagement and Enrollment

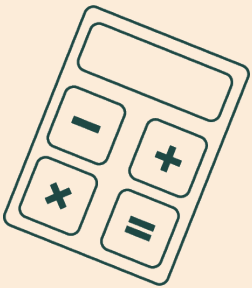


- What are reviewers looking for?
 - Demonstrated area of need
 - Proposed student population information and statistics
 - Demonstrated efforts related to community engagement
 - Evidence of demand
 - Clear understanding of how community engagement relates to the proposed enrollment figures and projected revenue
 - Attainable and sustainable enrollment projections based on community demand

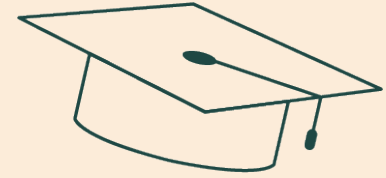


Funding and Support

- Each petitioning school should demonstrate a realistic understanding of costs and requirements during the pre-opening year
 - Must demonstrate a plan for opening
 - Budget template should reflect the plan
 - Highlight access to funding where applicable
 - Provide documentation!



Pre-Opening Team Capacity



- What are reviewers looking for?
 - Who is on your pre-opening team?
 - School Leader
 - Governing Board
 - Vendors
 - Larger Stakeholder Community
 - What role will they play?
 - Who will be responsible for different pre-opening requirements and how much support will they need to complete those tasks?
 - Facilities
 - Hiring
 - Enrollment and Marketing
 - Are there any special skills that you will need during the pre-opening phase?
 - If so, are they already on your team or do you still need to fill those gaps?
 - Will you need a volunteer or vendor?



Questions?

