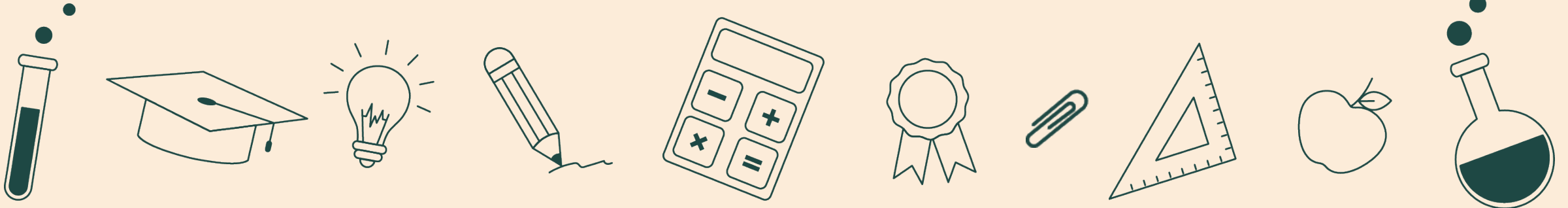




The Petitioner's Guide to Pre-Opening Expectations

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

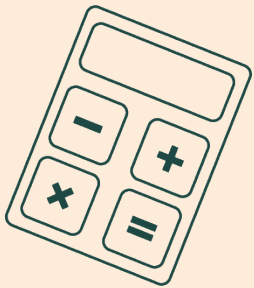


- Facilities
- Community Engagement and Enrollment
- Funding and Support
- Pre-Opening Team Capacity



Facilities- When?

- Every petitioning group should have a facility plan or timeline reviewed and 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 to identify a facility at the time of petition submission and should be able to speak to those plans during the capacity interview.
 - The facility selection process can be very time-consuming during the pre-opening year, so petitioners should consider the pre-opening timeline while working on 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?
 - If not, does the school already have a long-term facility plan?
 - Would 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 require documentation to support the budget line item
- **Will the facility require construction or renovation?**
 - Are these costs appropriately considered in the budget?
- **Will the school use a lender to finance the facility?**
 - Has the school considered how 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
 - Are there additional hidden costs?
- **Be aware of local regulations**
 - Building codes/ADA
 - Zoning
 - Certificate of Occupancy
- **Be aware of GaDOE Facility Requirements**



Facilities- Why?

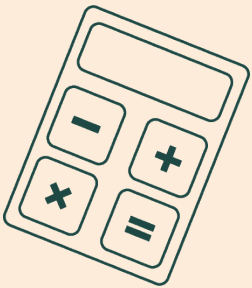


- The petitioner should be able to clearly explain the facility plan in both the petition and capacity interview.
- Why is the current plan superior to alternative strategies?
- Has the school done a cost-benefit analysis?
- Does the school's location meet the needs of the anticipated student population?
 - 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)

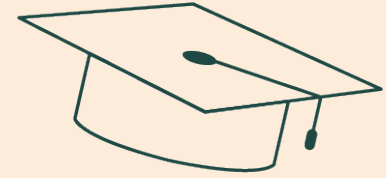


Facilities- Who?

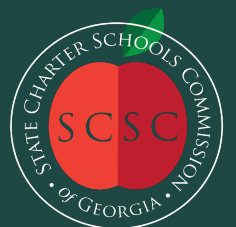
- Each petitioning group should have someone directly affiliated with the school identified to lead the facility efforts.
 - The governing board should consider what type of expertise it needs for the proposed facility plan
 - real estate, construction, legal, financial
 - Petitioners should be prepared 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?
 - The petitioner has demonstrated that there is an 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 evidence-based community demand

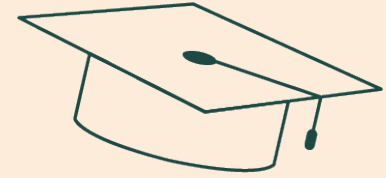


Funding and Support

- Each petitioning school should demonstrate a realistic understanding of costs and requirements during the pre-opening year
 - Must demonstrate a plan for opening throughout the applicable petition questions
 - 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?

