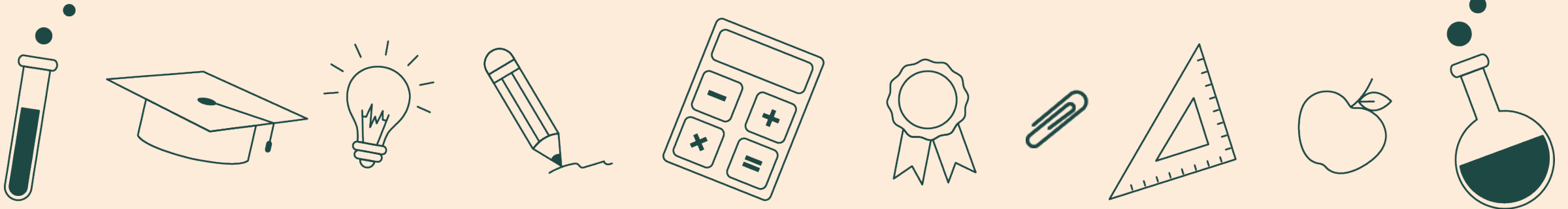




The Petitioner's Guide to the SCSC's Facility Expectations

Kristen Easterbrook, State Charter Schools Commission
Cameron Quick, GCSA Facility Resource Center





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



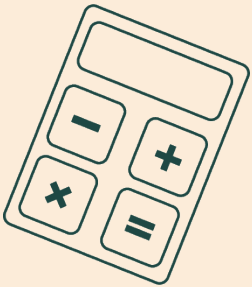
The petition application and reviewers will ask:

- When?
 - Facility timeline
- Where?
 - The location of the facility
- How?
 - Financing
 - Renovation or construction
- Why?
 - The logic behind the petitioner's plan
- Who?
 - Leadership
 - Guidance



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.

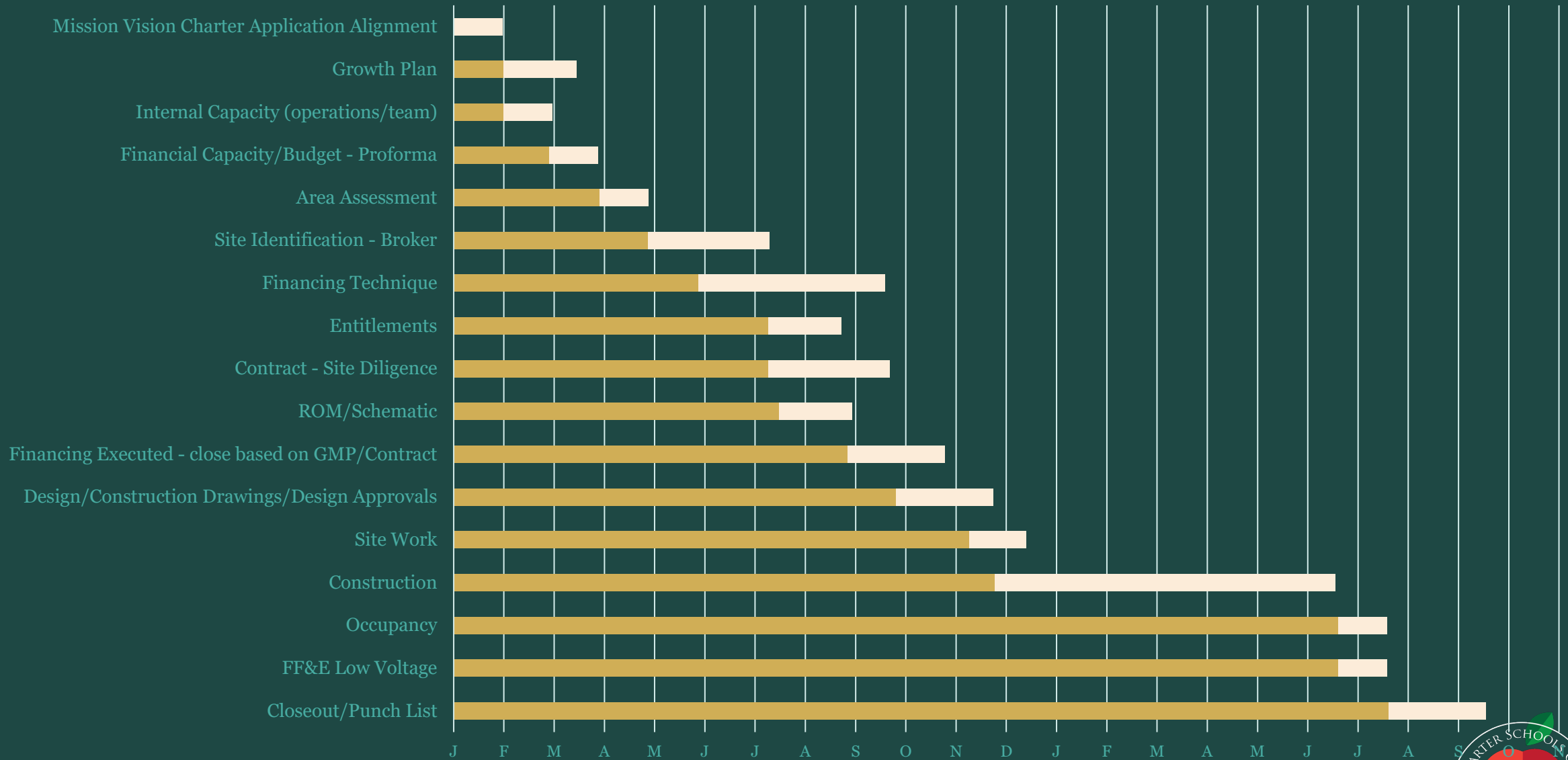


Timeline and Milestones

- How do you cut a project timeline in half?
 - Easy, start a charter school.
- Three components to consider
 - Time
 - Quality
 - Cost
- You get to pick two if you're lucky.
- What are things we can take on for zero costs as it relates to the project?



Timeline and Milestones – 21.5 Months



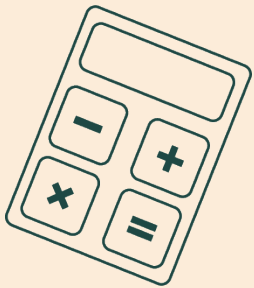
Where?



- 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](#)

How?

- How will the school acquire the facility?
 - Lease
 - Purchase
 - Donation
- Will the facility require construction or renovation?
 - Are these cost 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.
- Be aware of local regulations
 - Building codes
 - ADA
 - Zoning
 - Certificate of Occupancy
- Be aware of GaDOE Facility Requirements



Affordability – How much can I afford?

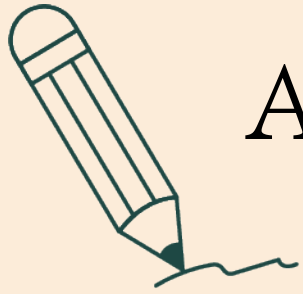


Changes with years of operating history - 12% is a number to aim for

New Schools

- Typically have a higher facility cost than established schools
- Efficiencies of scale – space dictates
- Leases and landlords assist in dictating risk and cost of risk
 - Rent credits
 - TI allowances
- Try to grow into the space
- New spaces?
- “Affordability” vs. actual costs
- Churches





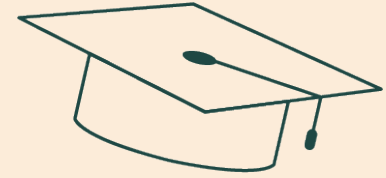
Affordability – How much can I afford?

Other costs to factor:

- Insurance
- Janitorial
- Utilities
- Maintenance
- Traffic control
- Deferred maintenance (2% reserve)

You can't go house hunting if you don't know your budget. Your architect has no problem designing what you can't afford.

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)



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](#)



Building Capacity – it takes a village



- Start with 2 – involving a board member
- Draft a narrative for how your academic paradigm fits into the programming of a facility
- Where is your target area and why?
 - What are all the schools located within 1,2,3,5 miles?
 - What grade levels do they currently serve?
 - What is the net change in enrollment for those schools?
 - Which schools will be feeder schools for you and which schools will you be a feeder school for?
- Build a Real Estate Offering (REO) for prospective landlords
- Engage a broker – someone who specializes in commercial space
- Try to get an attorney on your board – legal docs and contracts to come!



Building Capacity – it takes a village

Documents that grow:

- Board members and bios
- Leadership team and bios
- Facility team – contacts, roles, and qualifications
- Project budgets – hard and soft costs
- Financing or development strategy
- Narrative of academic paradigm
- 5 year financial forecast
- Enrollment contingency budgets



Questions?

