

Michigan Department of Education  
Public School Academy Program

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF SECOND ROUND  
2007-2008 CHARTER SCHOOL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS**

**THIRTEENTH CYCLE**

**No Child Left Behind Act  
Title V, Part B, Public Charter Schools Program  
In Cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is pleased to announce the 2007-2008 Charter School Planning and Implementation Grant – Thirteenth Cycle. The program is supported under Title V, Part C, Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP), No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) was successful in receiving a grant under this program for \$21,673,806 over a three year period to support qualified public school academy developers as they apply for charter contracts and public school academies in the initial phases and years of implementation. Only non-profit corporations will be eligible to apply. During 2007-2008 **\$3,670,000** will be available for Planning and Implementation subgrants. The MDE accepted applications for Round One subgrants in August from PSA planners working with Michigan authorizers toward a school scheduled to open by fall 2008, and will award 12-month grants to successful applicants by October 1, 2007.

This second round solicitation invites 18-month grant applications from earlier stage PSA planners who have submitted an application to a Michigan authorizer, even though they may not yet have been selected by an authorizer to submit a second-phase application or negotiate a contract. Such development teams may apply in this round for program planning and design funds. Although some applicants may find it possible to use these funds toward a fall 2008 school opening, MDE expects most applicants will use the maximum 18 months of planning time to prepare for a fall 2009 school opening.

The second round application form will be available through the *Michigan Electronic Grants System (MEGS)* upon release of this announcement. Completed applications must be received at the Michigan Department of Education by January 10, 2008. Review panels are expected to score the applications by mid-February; grant announcements are expected by March 1 for an April 1, 2008 award date.

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACADEMIES IN MICHIGAN**

Charter schools in Michigan are designated in statute as “Public School Academies” and must be organized under one of three sections of the Michigan Revised School Code. Please go to [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov), click on “legislature” (on the right hand menu) and enter the MCLA numbers below to download and read the entire applicable sections of law before deciding which kind of PSA is being developed:

Part 6A (MCLA 380.501-380.507) for Public School Academies  
Part 6C (MCLA 380.521-380.529) for Urban High Schools  
Part 16 (MCLA 380.1311b-380.1311l) for Strict Discipline Academies

Most of Michigan's "Public School Academies" as defined in statute meet the federal definition of a "charter school" and are thus eligible for Program Planning and Design and for Implementation grant funds. However, some PSAs that do not count pupils for the purpose of receiving state aid do not meet federal criteria for eligible applicants. Contact MDE staff (at 517/241-6668) to determine the PSA's eligibility if the proposed charter school does not intend to count pupils for the purposes of receiving state aid.

## **GRANT PURPOSE**

The purpose of this grant program is to:

- broaden and strengthen the pool of charter applicants available to Michigan authorizers, and
- support those charter applicants that succeed in obtaining a charter contract as they launch the schools they planned.

To that end, MDE invites proposals from PSA developers for up to 18 months of program planning and design in three stages:

- Stage One: Refinement of an ambitious, innovative academic vision, and design of a data-based program evaluation methodology that will demonstrate to the governance body whether the vision is succeeding. Up to \$35,000 will be released upon award for use in completing these deliverables.
- Stage Two: Development of a sound, comprehensive business plan to support the academic vision and finalization of a full second-phase charter application strong enough to secure a charter contract from a Michigan authorizer. Up to \$75,000 of additional funds will be released upon satisfactory completion of Stage One for use in completing these deliverables.
- Stage Three: Ramping up operations toward opening, including engaging and training staff. Up to \$50,000 of additional funds will be released upon acquisition of a charter contract.

Implementation funding is available to successful planning grantees for up to the first two years of operations of a new PSA for purposes of equipping and supplying the school; developing needed materials and systems; and acquiring curriculum materials, texts, classroom equipment, and supplies. Planning grantees apply for each year's funding, but do not compete again for implementation funds.

This grant and the federal statutes that accompany it require strict and full adherence to the Public Charter School Program (PCSP) "single grant standard." This "single grant" provision says that an applicant that receives a grant under this competition is eligible for up to thirty-six (36) months of total allowable funding dependent upon the date of the grant award, the date of authorization of the charter school, and the availability of federal funds. Public school academies must be tuition-free and non-discriminatory in all policies and procedures.

Notification of this grant will be made available to Michigan Intermediate School Districts, Local Educational Agencies, Public Universities, Community Colleges, organizations, and other interested persons. It will also be posted to the Michigan Department of Education website at <http://www.michigan.gov/charters>.

## **ELIGIBLE/LEGAL APPLICANTS**

Eligible applicants during the first round include:

- Non-profit PSA developers who have submitted a charter application to at least one Michigan authorizer, and who have informed the authorizer of their intent to apply for federal funds may apply for program planning and design funding.

Program Planning and Design grant awards are specific to the proposed or authorized public school academy and the community targeted at the time that the application is submitted. The competitive grant award is based upon the projected need of the community identified, students to be served, and how the charter school will address those needs. If a proposed charter school is awarded a Program Planning and Design grant and changes the originally identified community location of the project, the grant will not transfer to the school in a new community location without substantial post-award documentation of the identical need of the community and the essential applicability of the original proposal to the school in its new location.

Grant award recipients that later change the name of the school must provide the written assurance of the authorizing entity that the PSA authorized is essentially the same proposed school that was originally awarded the grant.

A for-profit entity does not qualify as an eligible applicant. An educational service provider (ESP) may help prepare an application for a grant award if it is acting as an agent of the charter school or proposed charter school board. However, an ESP must provide documentation that they are acting as the agent of an eligible non-profit applicant, and the contact person for the application must be part of the non-profit governance structure and not part of the ESP.

For information, forms and instructions regarding nonprofit incorporation in Michigan, visit the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) website at [www.mi.gov/dleg](http://www.mi.gov/dleg). Choose business services ... corporations ... domestic nonprofit corporation. Please note that Michigan allows two types of corporations, both of which actually operate schools:

- PSA corporations, and
- Education corporations

Each of these require compliance with additional regulations and are NOT necessary for grant eligibility purposes.

Development teams seeking incorporation during planning phases are encouraged to secure general nonprofit incorporation, and to state clearly in the purposes outlined in that application that they will not operate a school. If the team succeeds in obtaining a charter contract from an authorizer, the authorizer will direct/assist the team in forming a PSA corporation, which can be formed only at the direction of an authorizer.

## **GRANT RANGE AND LENGTH OF AWARD**

During the three year grant cycle, funds up to **\$160,000 for up to 18 months** of planning and program design may be used for activities consistent with federal law including but not limited to:

- Articulation and refinement of desired educational results;
- Identification of methods capable of achieving desired results;
- Professional development of teachers and staff that will work in the school, or of volunteer board members;
- Planning, procurement, or development of testing designed to measure student achievement;
- Design of formative evaluation processes that feed information about student achievement back to teachers, or information about contractual and financial compliance back to administrators;
- Staff salaries and benefits prior to opening the school and becoming eligible for state aid;
- Technology and office equipment, software, and limited office furniture to serve planning staff during the start-up period (not classroom equipment);
- Legal and professional costs related to planning for the school and its educational program;
- Costs directly related to compliance with legally mandated school health and safety inspections including minor building modifications to ensure compliance (e.g., the installation

of grab bars or lowering of sinks in a restroom). However, larger renovations such as elevator installation or repair, for instance, are not allowable;

- Fees to trainers or consultants to provide training, system design or staff development;
- Reasonable costs of travel, lodging etc. to enable staff to participate in learning together.

Two continuation grants of up to **\$150,000 for up to 24 months** of implementation (which may begin shortly before the school opens) may be awarded for activities consistent with federal law, including but not limited to:

- Informing the community about the school (for instance radio, print or electronic media development and dissemination costs, but not building signage);
- Acquiring technology equipment and software for classroom use (e.g., computers, printers, LCD projectors, etc. as well as hook-up and installation costs);
- Texts and library books for use in the educational program;
- Desks, tables, chairs and bookshelves etc for use in the educational program;
- Educational supplies and materials (does not include general use office supplies/equipment),
- Acquiring or developing curriculum materials, aligning with state expectations and preparing staff to use those materials.

**Planning and Implementation grants may be awarded for a total period of up to three years (36 months), with no more than 18 months used for planning and program design, and no more than two years (24 months) used for initial implementation of the PSA.** Note that this means that a grantee that opts for 18 months of planning and program design time will receive only 18 rather than 24 months of implementation time. The applicant should propose a customized schedule that fits its unique situation, while ensuring that no more than 36 months total are used.

All funding will be subject to approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, based on reviewer ranking, comments, availability of funds, and Department recommendations.

## **REJECTION OF PROPOSALS**

The Michigan Department of Education reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this announcement.

## **CLOSING DATE**

The application **must be received in MEGS by midnight January 10, 2008.**

## **APPLICATION PREPARATION**

The Charter School Grant application consists of five parts:

**1) Demonstrate that the PSA developer team has applied for a charter contract** with at least one active Michigan authorizer, and that the PSA has notified the authorizer of its intent to apply for federal funds.

Download the application document either inside MEGS or from [www.mi.gov/charters](http://www.mi.gov/charters). Use the information from the charter application you submitted to answer the questions on pages 2-5 of the grant application to summarize the design decisions taken to date. Wherever alternatives are still being evaluated, use that question to describe any grant-funded activities that will allow research into alternatives, finalize design choices or implement the design.

- 2) **Complete the management plan template** on page 6 of the grant application by consolidating the activities described in your narrative that you intend to undertake with grant funds into a single comprehensive work plan.

When you have completed the first two steps (inside the grant application document), save the document as a word-processing file, return to MEGS and upload the document as the "Narrative" under "Program Information" The remaining steps will be completed inside MEGS.

- 3) **Complete the MEGS "Budget Summary" "Budget Detail" and "Future Funding" pages** showing what funds you are requesting and how you will use them. Be specific about number of units and cost per unit. For instance, MDE needs to know that you will buy 3 days of someone's time at \$400/day, not just that they will design an evaluation tool.

For definitions of the expense categories used in the budget summary, see the School Accounting Manual, beginning on page 24. You can find those definitions at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/appendix\\_33974\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/appendix_33974_7.pdf)

- 4) **Complete the MEGS "Budget Narrative" page** showing how you arrived at the amounts on the budget pages and which management plan activities will be addressed by each amount, and
- 5) **Commit to the required Assurances and Certifications** by reading each one, checking the boxes and submitting the MEGS application.

Reviewers will see only this MEGS-submitted grant-application material, so be sure to include full details, even if you have previously submitted them elsewhere (for instance, to an authorizer as part of a charter application).

Before submitting the grant application, applicants are encouraged to use the rubric reviewers will use to score their own applications, noting and remedying gaps to maximize their competitive score.

## REVIEW PROCESS

All applications will be evaluated using a peer review system. Qualified individuals from across Michigan's charter school sector will form a panel to score applications based on merit, quality and thoroughness, as determined by the attached rubric. All funding will be subject to approval by the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction. All applicants will be notified of the Superintendent's action.

Applicants may wish to refer to the Michigan Department of Education's *"Proposal Development Guide"* for additional assistance in developing their proposal. This guide may be found under [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/propdevguide\\_13484\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/propdevguide_13484_7.pdf).

## FUNDABLE ACTIVITIES

**Applicants must focus on one or more of the allowable activities listed below.** The examples listed on pages 3-4 above are illustrations of costs which have in the past fallen under these statutorily allowable activities. Under the allowable activities described in Public Law 107-110, Title V, Part B, Section 5204 (f)(3), grant funds must be used for the following:

### PROGRAM PLANNING AND DESIGN GRANTS:

1. Post-award planning and design of the educational program, which may include:
  - a. refinement of the desired educational results and of the methods for measuring progress toward achieving those results; and

- b. professional development of teachers and other staff that will work in the charter school; and

#### **IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS:**

2. Initial implementation of the charter school, which may include:
  - a. informing the community about the school;
  - b. acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies;
  - c. acquiring or developing curriculum materials; and
  - d. other initial operational costs that cannot be met from State or local sources.

### **REQUIRED ACTIVITIES**

Among the activities included in each program planning and design grant application's budget and budget work plan must be participation in a series of mandatory application strengthening support services developed and coordinated by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA). Periodic resource, networking and informational sessions will address:

- Orientation to managing a federal grant,
- Introduction to Michigan and national teaching and learning models showing demonstrated success in high student achievement, including those serving at-risk student populations,
- Introductions to operating Michigan PSAs eligible to serve as mentors to development teams,
- Orientation to responsibilities of a PSA Board Member,
- Coaching on how to approach potential authorizers.

The year-long networking fellowship will be invoiced to each grantee at \$10,000 and its cost should be incorporated into the program planning and design grant proposal.

### **PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Payments to grantees will be made upon filing the MDE's "Expenditure/Request Form, DS-4492A." The grantee is permitted to request reimbursements and advance payments not exceeding actual immediate cash needs up to the total amount of the award. "Immediate cash needs" means that the recipient needs funds within 3 days to pay bills incurred.

### **PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

As a condition of receiving PCSP funding, all grantees will provide the Department with a progress report of their performance in meeting program objectives set forth in the application for the grant. The performance reports should address the outcomes of the objectives that were outlined in the budget work plan and should clearly describe how the activities of the grant period met, or failed to meet, proposed goals and objectives. The reports are due on the following dates and will be completed via the *Michigan Electronic Grants System (MEGS)* via the web:

**Monday, October 6, 2008 (Midterm Report)**

**Thursday, October 29, 2009 or 30 days after completion of project (Final Report)**

### **FINANCIAL REPORTING**

The Department's "**Final Expenditure Report Form**" is used for final financial reporting and must be completed online by **Monday, November 30, 2009 or 60 days** after completion of the project. Failure to complete the report could result in **loss of funding** which the academy must repay to the Michigan Department of Education.

### **FINANCIAL AUDIT OR REVIEW**

The MDE reserves the right to conduct a financial audit or review of the subgrantee's program expenditures at any time during the subgrant period.

## **FUTURE FUNDING**

Michigan's 2007-2008 Charter School Grant Program is in its thirteenth annual cycle of funding. If federal funds continue to be appropriated under the Charter Schools Grant Program, grants will again be available in the future.

## **WHERE TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE**

These materials are issued by the Michigan Department of Education, Public School Academy Program, which is the sole point of contact in the state for this program. Questions not answered by information on the web at [www.mi.gov/charters](http://www.mi.gov/charters) should be directed to the Public School Academy Program, Office of School Improvement at 517/373-4631.

Other resources:

Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA)  
215 South Washington Square - Suite 135  
Lansing, MI 48933  
phone: 517-374-9167  
fax: 517-374-9197  
[www.charterschools.org](http://www.charterschools.org)

MAPSA is the association of operational PSAs, and offers technical support and assistance to development teams.

Michigan Association of Charter School Boards (MACSB)  
2284 Fieldstone Drive  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
phone: (517)819-4777  
[info@macsb.org](mailto:info@macsb.org)

MACSB provides web-links to the governing boards of existing PSAs, offers periodic workshops and conferences, and some orientation material for new board members.

National Charter Schools Institute (NCSI)  
2520 University Park  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
Phone: (989) 774-2999  
[www.nationalcharterschools.org](http://www.nationalcharterschools.org)

NCSI supports charter schools with board training, policy development, publications and organizational consulting.

Commercial Services and Corporations  
Department of Labor and Economic Growth  
[www.mi.gov/dleg](http://www.mi.gov/dleg) ... choose business services ... corporations ... domestic nonprofit corporation  
DLEG's Corporation Division provides forms and instructions for nonprofit incorporation.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Program Planning and Design Grant

### 1) What federal charter school start-up funding is available in Michigan?

Michigan competes every three years for a share of federally appropriated grant funds for the purpose of increasing the number of high-quality charter school options available to students and their parents. Upon receipt of a federal grant award, the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) Public School Academy Program (PSAP) then makes subgrants available to PSAs that are under development or in their first 36 months as an academy, for purposes and on terms laid out in its successful grant application.

The current 2007-2010 Michigan grant program is designed to

- strengthen the pool of PSA applicants available to Michigan authorizers, and to
- encourage high quality evaluative research on charter school experience.

It offers three types of subgrants:

- PSA developers that will not have opened a school on Oct 1, 2007 can apply for \$160,000 in **program planning and design** funds. Applications will be accepted in two rounds:
  - A July solicitation invited applications from developers that are far enough along in their work with a Michigan authorizer to be on track to open for the 2008-09 school year.
  - This October solicitation invites applications from earlier-stage developers that are still refining their designs and working toward 2009-2010 school openings.
- Two \$150,000 grants of **implementation funds** are available to active PSAs in their first 36 months of operation. Two kinds of applicants are eligible:
  - PSAs that are operational by the October 2007 award date, but never received a program planning and design grant were invited to apply for implementation funds during the July solicitation period. The two implementation project periods can extend over 24 months.
  - PSAs that successfully complete program planning and design grants can apply for implementation funding upon closing their planning grants. The length of time available for implementation funding will depend on the length of the planning period.
- PSAs in their fourth year of operation or beyond that meet specific criteria for having demonstrated success in student achievement will be invited in the October solicitation to apply for **dissemination grants** for use in:
  - Evaluating and documenting a promising practice over a two-year period to which the school attributes its success,
  - Mentoring new school design and development teams (including but not limited to Program Planning and Design grantees). Special attention will be devoted to soliciting applications from (and bonus points will be available to) successful high schools willing to mentor new high schools, or existing K-8's seeking to expand into grades 9-12.

### 2) Must I compete repeatedly for the planning and then the implementation grants?

No. Applicants only compete once. However, successful grantees **do need to apply** for the continuation grants when the previous one is completed and reporting requirements are fulfilled. The application specifies how the next grant will be used for eligible purposes.

**3) When will grant applications be available, and what is the due date for applications?**

Applications for the second round of Planning grants and for Dissemination grants will be available in MEGS upon release of this announcement, and will be posted on MDE's website at [www.mi.gov/charters](http://www.mi.gov/charters). Applications are due on January 10, 2008 before midnight.

**4) What is MEGS, and how do I apply if I've never used it?**

The Michigan Education Grant System (MEGS) is the web-based grant application, review and reporting system through which all state sub-grants will be obtained and managed. Each non-profit applicant's designated submitter will need to register as a Michigan Education Information System (MEIS) user and then use your MEIS number to obtain a MEGS log-in well before you need to submit your intended grant application. Each grant application information session will offer more detail for first-time MEGS and MEIS users.

**5) Do I need to be a non-profit to apply? How does one become a non-profit? What does that mean?**

Only non-profit corporations are eligible to receive funding through this grant program. Contact the Corporations Commercial Services division of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) for information on filing incorporation papers. For more information on becoming a non-profit corporation, contact 517/241-6470.

**6) How much funding will be available this year?**

The 2007-2008 Michigan grant award is for \$5,897,000. We expect to make it available as follows:

July Planning and Implementation solicitation	Up to \$1,120,000
October Earlier Stage Planning solicitation	Up to \$2,550,000
October Dissemination solicitation	Up to \$ 580,000
Continuation grants for previous grantees	\$1,350,000

**7) Who DIDN'T get the grants they applied for in previous rounds? What are the common deficits in the applications that reduce the scores awarded by reviewers?**

The review panels tend to assign lower scores to applications where responses are generic, lack significant detail, are not customized to the student population to be served, appear to be "canned" or jargon-filled and not individualized based upon unique characteristics of the school proposed or a thoughtful understanding of the community it proposes to serve.

Reviewers tend to assign higher scores where the proposed activities are detailed and well articulated. Budgets should include a clear narrative with as much detail as possible, including estimated unit costs. Close attention to addressing all aspects of the questions asked, with attention to the rubric the scorers will use, will result in a higher score.

Applicants should pay close attention to the directions provided in HELP in the MEGS application. Specific persons or positions should be indicated to be responsible for accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the project as part of the management plan. Budget narrative should explain how particular numbers were derived.

## **8) Who decides who gets the grant awards? Who are these “review panels”?**

MDE, Office of School Improvement, PSAP solicits interested persons to volunteer their time to serve as unpaid peer grant reviewers to review the applications submitted, score the applications based upon the established rubrics, and to rank the proposals received. Readers interested in becoming a peer reviewer may indicate their interest in reviewing charter school and other grants administered by MDE by registering on the MEGS grant system as a potential reviewer. Persons that serve on the review panel are typically instructional or administrative staff working in Michigan charter schools. Reviewers have also included representatives of authorizing bodies, the National Charter Schools Institute, the Michigan Association of Charter School Boards, and other qualified persons in the charter school movement.

The recommendations of the review panel for each charter school grant are summarized on a consensus review sheet and this is provided to the applicant for help in understanding why a grant may or may not have been recommended for an award. MDE's PSAP staff recommend where on the review panel's ranked scores a “cutoff” point should occur, based on strength of comments, technical review of budget management plan and availability of funds. Final decisions are made by the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction.

## **10) What is a successful applicant expected to do if it is awarded the grant funds?**

Grant recipients must ensure that grant funds are spent as proposed in the approved application. Two narrative performance reports will be required during the grant period describing the status and progress of the project. A form for the performance reports will be available to those successful applicants via MEGS.

There are also a number of obligations that come as a condition of accepting federal funding. Desk audits will check compliance of these requirements periodically, and at some time over the life of the grant, an on-site review will likely be conducted to determine if the PSA is complying with them. These range from needing to keep particular kinds of time and expense records ... to having particular policies in place ... to keeping an inventory of purchased goods. A recent document reminding current grantees of some of the most frequently misunderstood requirements is posted at [www.michigan.gov/charters](http://www.michigan.gov/charters). Other requirements are listed as part of the Assurances and Certification checklist in MEGS. Applicants are instructed to familiarize themselves with these requirements in advance and set up the needed systems at the beginning of the grant. Information about these requirements (and a sample of the checklist the reviewer will use) will be available at an early session of the required technical support program.

As a condition of acceptance of the grant, the school must participate in a grant program evaluation project that is being implemented by an outside evaluator under contract to MDE. Outside evaluation of Michigan's charter school grant program is a condition of the grant award by the United States Department of Education to MDE.

MDE's “Final Expenditure Report Form” is used for final financial reporting and is completed online 60 days after completion of the project. Failure to complete the Final Expenditure Report could result in loss of funding, which the academy must repay to the Michigan Department of Education.

## **11) What if I don't want or need the technical support?**

Because this grant cycle's program is designed to strengthen the pool of applicants available to authorizers, the technical support network is a critical component of its structure. When

Michigan authorizers consider a charter application from a grant recipient, they will be confident that applicants have participated in an intensive program that makes information, resources and feedback available as the applications have been developed. For this reason, participation in the technical support network by founders and potential board members as well as potential school administrators and staff is mandatory.

**12) What is the role of a management company in the grant application process?**

Charter school boards, once they have received a charter and are formally set up, have the option of contracting with an Educational Service Provider (ESP) – also known informally as a “management company” – to operate parts or all of the school. Some boards contract for human resource management, others for the lease and operation of a building, others for curriculum development or professional development sessions. Some go so far as to contract for the full “turnkey” operation of a school, and/or to delegate responsibility to act for the board in particular situations. Authorizers will want to know as part of their consideration of a charter application how you decided which parts of operations an applicant has decided to contract for, and how the applicant selected its (for-profit or non-profit) provider.

If the development team has already completed its due diligence and selected an ESP it intends to contract with, the ESP may help prepare a grant application if it is acting as an agent of an eligible, non-profit applicant. The legal applicant, however, must be the non-profit development team, and the contact person must speak for the governance board of the non-profit.

**13) I don't have all the application components thought through yet. I need to use grant-supported activities and time to research alternatives and decide. What should I do?**

Use the sections of the application to specify any decisions you have finalized. In any section where the decisions are not finalized, specify in detail the activities you plan to undertake (using grant funds) to come to resolution. By the time you've finished your grant activities, you should be able to return to the Phase One charter application and revise it to reflect a more powerful and fully-defined plan than you had when you began.

**Michigan Charter School Program      Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Start-up Grant Application Rubric      Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_**

Round Two applicants have been invited to reply to each question in two ways:  
 1) Name the decisions that have been taken to date, and  
 2) Describe the grant-supported activities that will lead to a finalization of each answer.

Reviewers should evaluate this type of application in two steps:  
 1) Rate each factor as the application stands now – from Excellent to Weak. Use the specific descriptors under “Excellent” to represent a highly competitive charter plan. If you rate the application as it now stands as less than Excellent, use the comment section to explain what it would take to bring this factor to Excellent status.

2) Then evaluate the proposed activities that will be undertaken to finalize the answer. Assign as many PROCESS STANDARDS as apply to the “Proposed Activities” box:  
 “S” for Specific tasks planned      “C” for Capable of leading to a competitive app  
 “I” for unusually Innovative      “R” for Realistic in an 18 month time frame

Each factor’s proposed activities can earn 1 point per PROCESS STANDARD. Thus, if the current application does not include an “excellent” description worth 4 points, the applicant can earn up to 4 points through the articulation of a set of activities to be undertaken that meets all of the above-listed standards.

Competitive Points					
	Excellent 4	Very Good 3	Average 2	Weak 1	Proposed Activities
<b>Assessment of Community Need</b>  Questions 1-2	Characteristics of the community are described in extensive, thoughtful, non-generic detail and include both assets and liabilities.	Community analysis good but lacks 1-2 elements	Community analysis begun , but generic or superficial	Community analysis unhelpful or not convincing	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	Unmet educational needs are described specifically enough to target an educational approach to meet them	Needs are identified but needs more detail	Some needs identified, but missing important ones	Needs analysis unhelpful	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	Quantitative evidence is presented that the need is recognized by potential families to be served.	Anecdotal evidence is provided	Some indications of interest	Very little data on family perceptions	
	<b>Comment:</b>				
<b>Student Population</b>  Questions 3-5	Quality of the evidence provided is objective, data-based, thorough and current.	Some data but lacks:	Mostly anecdotal evidence	Evidence not impressive	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	The plan demonstrates a thoughtful understanding of the developmental needs of students in the grade ranges it proposes to serve.	Good work, but lacks 1-2 important elements	Beginnings of analysis; lacks many elements	Little to no useful work evident	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	The plan profiles the expected student population’s learning needs with good specificity. Attends to ethnicity, achievement, socio-economic factors.	Good work, but lacks 1-2 important elements	Beginnings of analysis; lacks many elements	Little to no useful work evident	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				

	The plan identifies the school's competition well and identifies convincing competitive strengths.	Good work, but lacks 1-2 important elements	Beginnings of analysis; lacks many elements	Little to no useful work evident	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
Educational Program Questions 6-12	<b>Educational goals</b> are ambitious and innovative enough that if successful, the school will provide leadership in one or more identified areas to Michigan educators.	Educational goals offer significant local alternatives for families	Educational goals mirror or slightly exceed neighboring schools	Educational goals not measurable enough to evaluate	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	Curriculum and instructional design have been <b>evaluated against state-of-the-art alternatives</b> using criteria relevant to the school's anticipated population	Strong alternatives considered; criteria unclear	Some evaluation against unimpressive alternatives	No evidence of objective evaluation	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	<b>Curriculum</b> description is thorough, adapted to the expected student population, and related to Michigan's expectations	Good work, but lacks 1-2 important elements	Beginnings of good design, but lacks many elements	Little to no useful work evident	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	<b>Instructional</b> approaches are clear, adapted to the expected student population, and include plans for how teachers will master the approach.	Good work, but lacks 1-2 important elements	Beginnings of good design, but lacks many elements	Little to no useful work evident	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	<b>Support services</b> (ie latchkey, tutoring social workers etc) included in the plan have been chosen with the target population in mind	Design solid but lacks 1-2 elements:	Design needs substantial work on:	Little thought apparent about support.	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
Academic Planning	Plan for serving students with <b>special needs</b> shows evidence of understanding legal requirements AND of developing innovative means of complying with them.	Approach meets requirements but lacks innovation	Approach needs substantial work on:	Inadequate attention to special needs students	S C R I
	<b>Comment:</b>				
Attendance & Participation Questions 13-15	Advertising and Recruitment plans seem likely to generate enrollment sufficient to meet growth plan described in Question 5				
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	Retention strategies are appropriate to the student population described				
	<b>Comment:</b>				
Assessment & Evaluation Questions 16-19	Parent involvement begins in the design stage and continues in substantive ways throughout				
	<b>Comment:</b>				
	Assessment of student achievement is annual, capable of shaping and improving teaching and learning, and extensive enough to determine whether the educational goals are being achieved. Parents and students will be informed about progress regularly.				
<b>Comment:</b>					
	Annual standards for student achievement have been established;				

Academic Planning	they are appropriate for the anticipated student population;				
	Comment:				
	The school has a plan to collect data and to self-assess across the School Improvement Framework categories (Teaching/Learning, Leadership, Personnel & Prof Dev, School-Community Relations, Data & Info Management)				
Comment:					
Strength of Project Team  Questions 20-25	Development team includes parents, teachers, board members and administrators, and shows active participation expected from each to shaping design decisions				
	Comment:				
	Contractual relationships disclosed show thoughtful resolution of any potential or apparent conflicts of interest.				
	Comment:				
	PSA Governance board membership has been identified and oriented to governance responsibilities				
Comment:					
Business Planning  Questions 26-32	Facilities decisions or processes evidence solid understanding of Michigan's legal requirements and cost implications				
	Comment:				
	Pre- and post-opening financial and budget planning is realistic, specific enough to monitor and based on rational assumptions				
	Comment:				
	Contractual relationships proposed for the school reflect thoughtful planning to ensure any related-party relationships are disclosed and remedied.				
Comment:					

Bonus Points					
	Excellent (4)	Very Good (3)	Average (2)	Weak (1)	None
Middle or High School Design					
Mentorship relationship in place					
Teachers or unions on development team?					
Review Team's choice (recognition for something not noted in scoring system)					