

1. When will we see the individual public feedback that the district received?

Please see attached.

2. Who made the decision that the School Board would not ask questions last Tuesday after the presentation? Was the board consulted? Didn't the board have the opportunity to ask questions last year after the presentation? My feedback to you is that when it was stated at the beginning of the meeting I thought the intention was to submit additional questions, but then the meeting abruptly ended. I had many questions written and ready for discussion.

Board members were not prohibited from asking questions. Mrs. Bartee stated, "As previously discussed with Mr. Nolan, if you have any questions for the Charter Review Committee or the applicant, you can submit those directly to Mr. Nolan by noon on Friday to give both parties time to provide responses before your vote next Tuesday. Do not copy other Board members on your questions. He will collect and seek answers to all questions submitted. Please indicate if your question is for the applicant, the Charter Review Committee, or both. Although the representative for the Charter Review Committee may be able to answer specific questions about the contents of the presentation this evening, I recommend that you write down any questions you have about the recommendation and send to Mr. Nolan. This will ensure that you receive thorough responses since there were several internal and external content experts who served on the committee. Finally, I want to remind everyone that next Tuesday's Formal Meeting is the opportunity to comment, debate, and vote on the approval or denial of the application, not tonight's Study Session."

Since the entire 20-member review committee was not able to be present that evening, the District did request, not require, that Board members submit questions in the same manner as to the applicant to allow the District to provide thorough responses based on the expertise of members of the Charter Review Committee.

3. During the presentation last Tuesday, you highlighted the Charter School section of the website. Did the Charter School communication feedback go out to community members, specifically parents, in any other way than just the website? Specifically, through text and emails to parents, and social media? If yes, specifically how much in each category (i.e. number of texts, emails, social posts, etc.)? If not, why? (Though I have seen this linked directly on the homepage, at this moment, it is not and I had to use the search function of the site to find it.)

The following was sent directly to all parents/guardians and employees on February 28, 2023:

Charter School Application Feedback Opportunity

In accordance with state law, nonprofit organizations with the intent to open a charter school in a Tennessee school district must apply through the local School Board for that district for authorization. The CMCSS Charter Review Committee thoroughly reviews applications and makes recommendations to the School Board. The School Board approves or denies

applications. CMCSS received one charter school application this school year. To review and provide feedback on the application, please [click here](#).

In total, this was sent directly to parents/guardians and employees (parents/guardians and employees with contact information on file) via 74,648 email addresses, 83,948 phone numbers for SMS text message, and as a push notification for those who have the SchoolMessenger app. Additionally, it was posted as a Top News Story on the District homepage. Because there are a limited number of tiles on the homepage, as new stories are added, older information may not be displayed directly on the homepage. However, as commented, it can be searched on the website, found under *District News*, or found as a quick link on the School Board page: cmcss.net/school-board.

4. Did the review committee use the TN Department of Education Rubric as the standard for the application?

Yes.

5. If yes, did the review committee use any additional criteria beyond the rubric in assessing if the application met the standard?

No, there were no additional criteria used.

6. If yes, was it created in compliance with SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.01 and was submitted in advance by November 1, 2022?

Not applicable.

Section One Questions:

7. The first section of the application was said to “Partially Meets the Standard.” What if any part of this application change from last year when it was started to have “Meet the standard”?

In general, the review committee does not do a comprehensive review of previous years' applications nor thoroughly compare and contrast previous applications with current applications as the committee is charged with reviewing the current application. Since several of this year's committee members served on the committee last year, when there were opportunities to highlight readily recognized changes, the committee noted those. However, since there are new members of the review committee who bring their own expertise, experiences, and due diligence, there could be strengths, concerns, or questions raised that were not previously.

Finally, since the application must be considered in its entirety, if the applicant made changes from previous applications to one or more subsections of the current application, it could affect the viability of one or more other subsections of the application, ultimately having a potential

effect on reviewers' subsection scores that are considered collectively to determine the summary rating for each category.

8. On slide 13 it states as a deficiency, "Lack of alignment between their curricular materials and state standards with no clear plan for ensuring alignment of those materials." From my calculations, the application speaks to aligning to the standards at least ten times. How is this unclear that the applicant's curriculum won't be aligned with the standards, especially when it is required by law? Furthermore, is it reasonable to state that they will have optimum time to align knowing that it would be 4 years after opening in Montgomery County?

Per the TDOE rubric, recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and applicant interviews. Section 1.3 of the rubric states, "The curriculum is robust, supports the growth of all students, and **is aligned with Tennessee State Standards.**" It may be reasonable to think the applicant will have time to align their curriculum; however, the committee's charge is not to assume what the applicant will do but to base recommendations for approval or denial on the submitted written application. Furthermore, a characteristic of "Meets or Exceeds the Standard" in the rubric states, "The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation."

9. Does the TN Department of Education rubric for section 1.3 requires the administrator to be local?

Section 1.3 of the rubric does not include requirements about administrators and their qualifications. Requirements around the strength of an administrator are located in section 2.4. However, requirements in section 1.3 of the rubric state that the "The curriculum is robust, supports the growth of all students, and **is aligned with the Tennessee State Standards.**" Since the alignment of the materials to state standards is in question, and the applicant indicated in their interview that a primary lever they will depend on to ensure standards alignment is the expertise of the administrator they hire, those qualifications are important not only for our assessment of the requirements in section 2.4, but also in their plans for ensuring curricular materials that are aligned to state standards, as required by the rubric.

10. Has edreports.org been approved or selected by the TN Department of Education to indicate alignment with Tennessee State standards?

The expectation of the charter review committee is to rigorously evaluate each application. A part of that review is for committee members to include independent due diligence of the application as well as various resources, including independent, third-party organizations like edreports.org, to fully evaluate the application. State charter expectations of a quality authorizer are to grant charters only to applicants that have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of their particular school model.

The review committee reached consensus that the alignment between curricular materials the applicant intends to use and the Tennessee academic standards was in question based on information provided on page 56 of the application, in which the applicant states, "The K-12 Program Guide and supplemental curricula are **currently being aligned** to ensure that all Tennessee state standards will be taught thoroughly and to performance level descriptors equal to or exceeding the label of Met." Further, the applicant goes on to state on page 57, "ACAM has taken great care in selecting specific instructional materials and curriculum resources **that are aligned with Tennessee's State Standards** and that adhere to the framework of a Classical Education model." Since these two sections of the application contradict somewhat, Instructional team members of the review committee decided it would be beneficial to use another resource at our disposal as part of their independent due diligence to that much further assess the alignment of the materials they reference to College and Career Ready Standards, similar to those adopted by Tennessee. The results of this independent due diligence were presented to the review committee for consideration on **Feb 23, 2023**.

11. The committee identified three concerns about the student handbook. Were any of those elements of concern listed in section 1.10 of the TN Department of Education Rubric?

Please see criteria from section 1.10 below. Those criteria that are germane to these pieces of feedback from the review committee are in bold print:

- The student handbook includes relevant, comprehensive and **legally sound policies**.
- The student discipline policy provides effective and **legally sound** procedures to support a safe, orderly school climate and a strong school culture **while respecting student rights**.

12. What evidence does the review committee have that the applicant's stance on outstanding fees violates TN state law.

Section 1.10 of the rubric states: The Student Handbook (Attachment B) includes relevant, comprehensive, and **legally sound policies**.

On page 29 of Attachment B, C, the applicant states, "All financial obligations must be rectified prior to registration for the upcoming school year. Students with outstanding balances will not be issued report cards or be permitted to register for the next school year."

Payment of school fees may not be a condition to attending the public school or using its equipment.

TCA 49-2-110(c) and State Rules of the Tennessee Department of Education and Board of Education 0520-01-02-.16(a) state: The school shall not require any student to pay a fee to the school for any purpose, except as authorized by the board of education, and no fees or tuitions shall be required of any student as a condition to attending the public school or using its equipment while receiving educational training.

TCA 49-6-3003(b)(1) states: Tuition and fees may be charged by any county to pupils not residing in that county.

The following FAQ from TDOE provides more information:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/nutrition/Public_School_Fees_FAQ_Revised_May_2022.pdf

13. What evidence does the review committee have that the items listed in student decorum feedback will not sustain the intended culture for all students, teachers, administrators, and parents?

As indicated above, the primary concern of the review committee with the highlighted language was more germane to the criteria in section 1.10 that requires school culture to ensure "...a safe, orderly school climate and strong school culture **while respecting student rights.**"

14. What evidence does the review committee have that concerns raised have about student decorum standards were raised by community members with relevant experience regarding those standards? How many individuals highlighted this concern? How many of those individuals have direct experience in these standards in a K-12 environment?

There were comments not only in the survey that CMCSS distributed, but also in several posts on social media. This point was not made as primary evidence of the review committee's recommendation, but rather as something we wanted to ensure Board members were aware of so they could gather feedback from their constituents around that point as well.

15. In the application there were 60 letters of support. You mentioned 25-27 of them. What evidence does the review committee have that the additional letters are not from parents/guardians of CMCSS students?

The letters provided by the applicant were redacted letters of support, and the review committee could not verify that those individuals were residents of the community or parents of CMCSS students. Upon requesting the unredacted letters of support that the review committee could review and evaluate, those materials were not able to be provided for the full review committee to consider at the request of the applicant. Since the full review committee could not review those materials and consider them, the letters were not included in our report to the Board of Education.

16. The review committee suggests that the applicant has not shown "significant demand," however, the TN Department of Education Rubric states there must be "sufficient support." What exact number of letters of support indicates "sufficient demand" and has this number been shared with the applicant?

Please see below from Section 1.12 of the rubric:

- “There are sufficient letters of support, including those within the **local community**, evidence of outreach to parents, MOUs, or contracts with community partners that demonstrate support from the community, and which includes **compelling support from community members intending to enroll in the school.**”

As indicated in the question above, the full review committee could not consider the unredacted letters of support provided by the applicant to verify they were local to the community as required by the rubric. Further, the rubric explicitly requires compelling support from those intending to enroll in the school; according to the application, the main evidence of this kind of support that the review committee could consider is the survey they referenced that received 110 responses, 25% of which were respondents that expressed intent to enroll their students. The applicant indicates enrollment targets of 340 students in the first year. As of right now, there is not demand such that they could enroll an entire grade level according to their targets, which the review committee did not feel was “sufficient.”

Section Two Questions:

17. Does the review committee believe that the survey accurately depicts support of the charter applicant in Clarksville Montgomery County?

The review committee does not depict the survey we deployed as anything other than another indication of perceptions about the application, an opportunity for additional public comment on the application materials, and another piece of information at Board Members’ disposal as they make their decision about this application.

18. Page 91 of the application states concerning IEP students, “For students with the most profound disabilities that require a more restrictive educational environment, this can include pull out services no more than 21% of the student’s day. Greater than 21% but less than 60% of the day in separate classrooms than their peers. Greater than 60% of the school days for students requiring a separate classroom for all or most of their instruction. The IEP team must consider the child’s needs and the goals written in the yearly IEP first when determining the LRE for a student and not let the child’s disability category lead the discussion of the LRE and services.”

With this in mind what evidence does the review committee have that the applicant will have predetermined decisions outside of the IEP process?

The evidence is the the language contained in the written application as noted “students with the most profound disabilities that require a more restrictive educational environment, this can include pull out services no more than 21%” of the student’s day.”

Guidance outside of the IEP team decision-making cannot limit the amount of time that a student needs pull-out services. The decision must be made based on the student’s individualized needs. The way this is written is that students with profound disabilities

cannot be pulled out for services more than 21% of their day which predetermines their IEP services, instead of making individualized decisions based on student's data and needs.

19. What evidence does the review committee have that applicant will not deploy services in subjects other than ELA and math classes?

Recommendations for approval or denial are based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and applicant interview. There was no evidence from the applicant regarding other subjects.

20. What analysis does the review committee have to provide evidence co-teaching ELL students as they describe will not be feasible with the staffing ratios outlined in the application (pg. 95)?

Using the ratio of the state, which is 1:35, it would be very difficult to provide the mandated service times required by the state in elementary. The applicant would also have to consider grade levels, intervention, etc. as they navigate services. In addition, the service plan would need to detail how higher language proficient students would be differentiated from lower language proficient students: higher being in a co-taught class while lower being given explicit language teaching.

21. What evidence does the rubric specifically require that the applicant's education model improves student achievement or closes student achievement gaps?

Please see below, from section 1.1 of the application rubric:

- When achieving its mission, the school, as described by the applicant, will offer a strong curriculum and a range of opportunities **to all students and will close achievement gaps.**

Please see below, from Tennessee Code Annotated 49-13-102(a) outlining the purpose of charter schools in Tennessee:

•(1) Improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students

22. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric representation in the form of a Montgomery County resident? If not, where did the review committee develop these criteria? Was the criteria developed by SBE rule 0520-14-01-.01?

Please see below from Section 2.1 of the rubric:

- The proposed board members offer a wide range of knowledge and skills needed to oversee a successful charter school including, but not limited to, educational, financial, legal, and **community expertise.**

Given that the board includes representation in the form of community residents for the other communities that the applicant proposes to serve, the review committee felt it would be pertinent to the Board to know that our community did not have representation in the form of a resident. Further, of greater concern is the lack of a guarantee in the bylaws provided by the applicant in their application (Attachments F), which does not guarantee that the board will continue to contain local representation. It is the position of the review committee that these realities call their level of community expertise into question.

23. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric have sufficient transparency and local influence on the applicant's board? If not, where did the review committee develop these criteria? Was the criteria developed by SBE rule 0520-14-01-.01?

Please see below:

- The proposed board structure is **likely to ensure effective governance** and meaningful oversight of school performance, operations, and financials.
- The proposed board members offer a wide range of knowledge and skills needed to oversee a successful charter school including, but not limited to, educational, financial, legal, and **community expertise**.

In reviewing the application and its materials in alignment with these requirements specified in the rubric, the review committee reached the below conclusions:

- Transparency is a cornerstone of effective governance.
- The applicant proposes a Board that will operate as a statewide entity without a Montgomery County resident, without a guarantee in their bylaws that there will be a Montgomery County resident. The review committee agreed that this lack of community representation similar to other areas the applicant proposes to serve, without a clear plan for how they will constitute a group with more local perspective that can support their operations, calls the level of transparency for this proposed Board and their ability to effectively govern into question.

24. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric K-12 representation on their Board? If not, where did the review committee develop these criteria? Was the criteria developed by SBE rule 0520-14-01-.01?

Please see below from section 2.1 of the application rubric:

- The proposed board members offer a wide range of knowledge and skills needed to oversee a successful charter school including, but not limited to, **educational**, financial, legal, and community expertise.

It is the position of the review committee that listing only one Board member as an "Education" expert as the applicant has done on page 124 places a heavy responsibility on that Board member in serving on a governing Board of a K-12 school. Further, that this Board member's expertise and professional experience with education is not in the K-12 environment, and not as a K-12 Education Professor, but as a college professor of economics was concerning to the

review committee. The review committee agreed that level of “educational” expertise will not enable them to oversee a successful school.

25. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric require to highlight more than land?

Please see below from section 2.3 of the application rubric:

- The applicant outlines a **sound plan and timeline** for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility.

Given that the applicant only provided the land they are considering and a plan for constructing a new school, the review committee focused primarily on evaluating that aspect of their plan. As highlighted in the presentation of findings, the review committee is concerned with the estimated costs (or lack thereof) and the timeline of this plan, calling its soundness into question. There were no other facilities for the review committee to consider.

26. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric require to provide a list of contingency facilities?

Please see below from Section 2.3 of the application rubric:

- The applicant has identified a **realistic** facility contingency plan.

Based on the minimal information about alternative facilities provided in the application, the review committee cannot assess if their contingencies are realistic.

27. Did the applicant provide a contingency plan if they could not secure a location?

The applicant indicates they plan to delay opening in the event that they cannot secure a facility. We understand this is an option they have available to them; however, the review committee agreed that a better understanding of the other contingency options they are considering besides a delayed opening would be beneficial. That plan will ultimately burden students and parents who may attend the school. In evaluating all aspects of this application, the review committee strives to fulfill those expectations outlined in the Charter School Quality Authorizing Principles from the State Board of Education:

It is the responsibility of an authorizer to “Protect Student and Public Interests,” specifically to “keep the well-being of students at the center,” and to “hold schools accountable for fulfilling their obligations to the public.”

28. What number did the applicant provide for cost of construction in the application?

We could not find any definitive construction estimates in the proposed budget sheets. We could only find a line item for rent at \$12/SF per 80 SF/Student, for a total of \$353,600 (Page 513). The four addresses provided for potential locations are all open green fields.

29. Once the review committee determined that there was a misunderstanding of the applicant's start-up plan, did the committee reach out to the application for clarification? If not, please explain why?

To be clear, the review committee did not determine there was a misunderstanding of the start-up plan. We simply indicated that we feel a timeline of a few months for construction is not sufficient to ensure their facilities plan is "sound," but wanted to clarify that it's possible we were not clear on the timeline as indicated in their start-up plan. If there is ultimately a decision to deny the application and the applicant has an opportunity to submit an amended application, it is something we feel could be beneficial to clarify.

30. The review committee suggest that the architectural rendering provided in their application was estimated that it will be "much more expensive" than what they allot in their budget. What number was allotted in the application for the total construction cost of the facility? What analysis was done by the review committee and by who to generate the cost of the facility of the rendering provided by the applicant?

We could not find any definitive construction estimates in the proposed budget sheets. We could only find a line item for rent at \$12/SF per 80 SF/Student, for a total of \$353,600 (Page 513). The four addresses provided for potential locations are all open green fields. The analysis was based off our current Barksdale ES 12-Classroom Addition & Renovations project that would be similar to the proposed Charter School rendering. The BES project consists of 12-classrooms, auxiliary gym, administration offices, library modifications, and cafeteria & kitchen modifications.

Barksdale ES

Total Cost - \$8,906,875

Total SF – 41,487 SF

Cost/SF - \$215/SF (This is all 1-story construction and renovation)

Proposed Charter School

Phase I – 30,000 SF

Phase I Cost at \$215/SF = \$6,450,000 (Using 1-story Cost/SF)

Phase I Cost at \$280/SF = \$8,400,000 (Using 30% increase for 2-story Cost/SF)

Phase II – 20,000 SF

Phase II Cost at \$215/SF = \$4,300,000 (Using 1-story Cost/SF)

Phase II Cost at \$280/SF = \$5,600,000 (Using 30% increase for 2-story Cost/SF)

Total Cost at \$215/SF = \$10,750,000 (Using 1-story Cost/SF)

Total Cost at \$280/SF = \$14,000,000 (Using 30% increase for 2-story Cost/SF)

31. The review committee mentions the absence of a logo identifying information for an architect for the rendering provided. Did the committee ask the applicant for this information? If not, why?

The applicant was asked to provide updates on their facilities plans during the capacity interview. There was no information provided at that point in time about a partnership that had been formed for the source of the facilities rendering. The applicant was also asked to provide any existing MOUs to accompany information they provided regarding their cost assumptions and some of their other financial provisions, and there was no MOU provided for an architect or other designer.

32. On page 149 of the Charter Application it states, “The following represents the properties that are under consideration. ACAM has looked at 22 potential green field sites and 3 existing facilities and would value input and feedback from CMCSS Schools as its authorizer. “ What feedback to the review committee was provided directly to the applicant before our presentation last Tuesday per requested of the Charter application about the potential facilities or land?

During the capacity interview, we asked the applicant for an update on their facilities plan. They did not provide any more specific detail about the 22 potential green field sites or the 3 existing facilities they are considering for the review committee to provide any feedback or input. The charge of the review committee, as specified in the Department of Education’s rubric, is to ensure that “recommendations for approval or denial are based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and applicant interviews.” The avenues for the applicant to provide information to the review committee for consideration are the application, and the capacity interview.

33. You highlighted four possible locations for the applicant listed from the application. Did the applicant identify these locations as their final location or as possible locations?

The charge of the review committee is to ensure that “recommendations for approval or denial are based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and applicant interviews.” Furthermore, the requirements of the facilities portion of the rubric are for the applicant to outline a “sound plan and timeline for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility.” We cannot assess the soundness of a facilities plan based on what we assume the applicant might do or what they could do instead. We are charged with providing a recommendation based on the requirements in the rubric, according to the written application materials, the capacity interview, and where applicable, independent due diligence.

34. What evidence can the review committee provide that the applicant cannot meet the projected enrollment demographics they provided?

As detailed in slide 23 of the review committee’s presentation, in reviewing the target demographics the applicant provided, and the demographics of the surrounding area where the applicant indicates they are considering locating their school, it would be challenging for the applicant to meet these enrollment targets by following the strategy that they specify they will

follow of focusing on those students “immediately surrounding the school,” without a definitive transportation plan.

35. Does the TN Department of Education Rubric require the applicant to not employ at-will?

Section 2.4 of the rubric states that a strong response will ensure that a “recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures **are likely to result** in a strong school leader and key staff.” Further, the rubric states that “**Recruiting and hiring practices** ensure proper licensure and are likely to result in a diverse leadership team and staff...”. The review committee agreed, based on our own experiences with the challenge of hiring teachers in our current labor market, that at-will employment will not make the applicant likely to employ key staff, nor would those recruiting or hiring practices ensure proper licensure and would be likely to result in a diverse leadership team and staff.

36. What evidence does the review committee have that the applicant’s salary structure does not meet the rubric standard?

The rubric states that “Compensation packages are likely to attract and retain qualified staff.” The review committee stated that we were not clear on their current compensation structure to effectively make that determination.

37. You stated, “The application indicates there will be a corrective action process involved when an administrator is found to not be meeting expectations (Pg. 155).” This was a specific concern was raised in the capacity interview and answered in detail by the applicant. What additional questions were raised after the interview to address, “aspects of that process that remain unclear (Pg. 157)” if no questions were asked, why?

The rubric states “The applicant provides a detailed plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership...” The applicant details in the capacity interview some of the expectations they have for administrators for their knowledge and skills - such as academic, policy knowledge, etc. - and they indicate that if an administrator is “not performing,” they should be removed. One member of the applicant’s team indicated that they have criteria such as clarity of their performance goals as a school, expectations of the Board, etc. However, neither from the capacity interview nor from the application is there enough information from the applicant about support provided to those individuals toward meeting those goals. There is an indication in the application that there will be training provided through the Barney Charter School Initiative, but it was not clear to the review committee outside of that what additional support would be accessible to administrators to ensure their success in the event they are found not to be meeting expectations. We are charged with providing a recommendation based on the requirements in the rubric, according to the written application materials, the capacity interview, and where applicable, independent due diligence.

38. Transportation is listed as a deficiency during the presentation, but is also listed as not required by the TN Department of Education Rubric. How can something that is not required be a deficiency?

As described in the review committee's report, the lack of a transportation plan is viewed as a deficiency by the review committee because it directly impacts the enrollment targets they have set which include a noticeable percentage of student population that currently rely on transportation to/from school, based on the current locations that the review committee has to evaluate that they are considering.

39. What number did the applicant allocate for transportation in the budget?

The applicant has budgeted \$115,000 per year for transportation expenses.

40. What factual evidence does the review committee have that the applicant won't be able to meet its enrollment requirements?

As indicated on slide 23 of the review committee's report, the current locations that the review committee has to evaluate in the application, the demographics for that area, the lack of a concrete transportation plan, and the targets and strategy detailed by the applicant do not align.

41. In light of recent events and legislative actions around school safety, what questions did you ask the application specifically concerning school safety?

The capacity interview took place before many of the recent events and legislative actions that led to greater concerns about the applicant's lack of a safety plan. However, regardless, the purpose of the capacity interview and the questions asked in that time is to clarify any misunderstandings that the review committee may have and provide the applicant with an opportunity to provide additional detail on their progress on their plans. The review committee felt the applicant was quite clear in their application that their safety plan is forthcoming, to be completed during the planning year. However, the expectations of the rubric are that the applicant "outlines a detailed safety and security plan for students, staff, guests, and property."

42. The review committee states they "feel" a more detailed plan is necessary for school safety and notes page 180 of the application, but notes a safety plan is still forthcoming. How does the review committee know that the forthcoming plan is not detail enough?

The charge of the review committee is to ensure that "recommendations for approval or denial are based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and applicant interviews." We cannot base our recommendation on hypothetical information that has not been completed. Furthermore, a characteristic of a "Meets or Exceeds the Standard" in the rubric states, "The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation."

43. Last year, this applicant had met the standard in section three. This year, they do not. What specific changes can the review committee highlight between last year and this year that would warrant this change in recommendation?

Specifically, operating under a new funding formula (the TISA formula) changed the way the review committee approached this standard, as it affects their estimation of revenues from the state level.

Section Three questions:

44. Did the applicant use the TDOE Charter School Applicant Budget Template as required by law?

Yes, the applicant did use the Charter School Applicant Budget Template.

45. Where in the TDOE Charter School Applicant Budget Template are substitute cost listed as a line item?

Each applicant completed their line items based on assessed needs determined by the applicant. This applicant did not list any expected expenses in their budget on their budget template for any school years for substitute teachers.

46. You mentioned custodial costs in the presentation. On page 513 they are listed at \$36,000 in year one and the assumption notes are also included. If the review committee is referring to year 0 where there is no line item, please explain what custodial cost they should expect before a facility is opened?

The comment about custodial cost was in reference to lack of custodial staff in years 1-5. Expenses with staff and supplies and materials will exceed \$36,000 per year given CMCSS' experience with a school with a population of 350 students.

47. You mentioned furniture costs in the presentation. On page 501 faculty furniture is listed at \$10,000 and the assumption notes are also included. If the review committee is referring to student furniture at year 0 where there is no line item, please explain what student furniture cost they should expect before a facility is opened?

Furniture cost should be budgeted in Yr 0 as to ensure all furniture has been received and installed for students to have furniture on the first day of school in Yr1.

48. The review committee states that the applicant "overestimates their revenue, especially from the state level". What factual evidence can the review committee provide to prove this is an overestimation?

The applicant has based their state revenue on full enrollment on day 1 of Yr 1, 350 students. Given that the applicant's budget is heavily based on fixed cost, any variation/reduction in student enrollment will place the applicant's school at risk for fiscal illiquidity. For example, if the applicant only receives 200 students, State Revenue will only be \$1,372,000 or a reduction of \$1,029,000 from their proposed budget of \$2,401,000. This would have a negative impact on the fiscal balance sheet and cash flow of the organization. Also, State Revenue is determined by previous year's enrollment. The state has not identified how or when funding would be distributed on new schools since the applicant does not have a firm attendance or previous year attendance. Finally, as has been highlighted in other questions, the review committee has major concerns with the ability that the applicant could have to meet their enrollment targets.

49. The applicant requested the same waiver in Section 2.11 last year and was found to meet the standard. What questions were asked of the applicant to better understand this waiver request? If none, why?

To be clear, the section with waivers is section 2, not section 3, which the applicant did not meet the standard for last year.

The concern with the waiver request from the applicant as it relates to their financials was not a major topic of conversation for the review committee until our April 3rd meeting, when the committee had a chance to come back together and discuss our findings after the capacity interview and a subsequent individual review period. After the capacity interview and a continued review of their financials, the review committee agreed that the breadth of concerns we had about their financials paired with that waiver request presented made it a pertinent concern to share with the Board for its ultimate consideration and decision. Further, TISA, Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement, is the new funding formula for the state of Tennessee for Fiscal Year 2024. One of the core purposes for the new funding formula is to provide transparency and accountability on student funding and expenditures. The waiver request is effectively requesting to negate this key requirement of TISA.

50. What evidence can the review committee provide to justify why the request for this waiver no longer meets the standard identified by the review committee last year?

Please see above for an explanation of where waivers are actually scored in the application. Further, TISA, Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement, is the new funding formula for the state of Tennessee for Fiscal Year 2024. One of the core purposes for the new funding formula is to provide transparency and accountability on student funding and expenditures. The waiver request is effectively requesting to negate this key requirement of TISA.