

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Mid-Ohio ESC Reviewer Expertise

Each application for sponsorship shall be reviewed by Mid-Ohio ESC’s application review team (“Review Team”). The Review Team shall be comprised of at least three (3) members/reviewers. The Review Team will be identified prior to each school year.

The Review Team may consist of Mid-Ohio ESC staff and, if necessary or desired, external sources. Members shall be selected based on their experience with community schools and/or have experience sponsoring community schools and expertise in the following areas of school planning and operations:

1. Education planning,
2. Governance,
3. Finance,
4. Accountability, and
5. A person with expertise in the mission and implementation of the proposed School, if a niche school as described below.

Mid-Ohio ESC shall endeavor to have at least two (2) reviewers with three (3) or more years of experience in sponsoring community schools. The Review Team shall not have a conflict of interest with any applicants. To ensure no conflict of interest exists, each member of the Review Team shall complete a conflict of interest form prior to reviewing each application.

If an application is from a “niche” school (*e.g.* career technical program, dropout prevention and recovery school, special education school, a school that proposes an area of specialization or an e-school), Mid-Ohio ESC shall add an additional reviewer with expertise in the respective niche.

Reviewer Protocols

Mid-Ohio ESC shall develop specific protocols for evaluating and scoring applications and shall develop an application rubric that aligns with the application requirements. The rubric shall include prescriptive criteria to demonstrate whether: there is clear capacity to operate the school, research data that shows strong market demand for the school, a quality educational program, a solid business plan, and a review of the school’s history that does not raise any continuing issues.

Each reviewer is required to individually score each application and document their rating in accordance with the rubric and to specify and cite evidence of their decision for each selection criteria. To ensure that applications are evaluated consistently, Mid-Ohio ESC shall hold an annual training on reviewer protocols, which shall include reviewer calibration as to when the Mid-Ohio ESC Board of Directors accepts applications for new community schools, replicators and schools seeking a change in sponsor. If Mid-Ohio ESC’s Board of Governors decides not to

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accept applications in a given school year, the sponsor will be evaluated only on the application review protocols and not on the training portion of the standard.

Decision Making

The Review Team shall provide evidence-based recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding application decisions. The Review Team shall not recommend the approval of an applicant unless (1) the applicant earns a “cut score,” which shall be at least 75% of the points possible and shall be the minimum points that an applicant can earn to receive a preliminary agreement; (2) the applicant’s school is consistent with the Board of Governors sponsoring mission, vision, and strategic plan; and (3) the applicant has completed the interview process. Along with its recommendation, the Review Team as a whole shall cite to evidence relative to whether the applicant meets each of the specified criteria.

Mid-Ohio ESC, at its sole discretion, may choose not to accept applicants or may reject to offer a preliminary agreement to otherwise qualified applicants upon determining that Mid-Ohio ESC does not have capacity, or resources to sponsor additional community schools.

Quality Practices Rubric: B.04 Reviewer Expertise; B.05 Reviewer Protocols; B.06 Rigorous Decision-Making (B.04 also applies to E.06 Renewal Application Reviewer Protocol)

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