Application Preliminary Evaluation Packet

For each section, please rate the response then explain your rating by specifying strengths and weaknesses in the space provided. Where applicable, you should elaborate on concerns by specifying additional information you would request or follow-up questions that you have.

Each section presents key characteristics of an “excellent” response. In general, the following definitions should guide your ratings.

- **Inadequate:** The response either fails to entirely address the selection criteria or addresses some of the criteria; yet the responses lack adequate detail and/or raise substantial concerns about the applicant’s preparation for and ability to start or operate a charter school successfully.

- **Average:** The response indicates solid preparation and grasp of key issues. It contains some of the characteristics of an excellent response although additional support or information may be needed in places.

- **Excellent:** The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of key issues and the ability to start a charter school successfully. It addresses the topic with clear, specific and accurate information that reflects thorough preparation.

Subcommittee Signatures

Jennie Adams  
John Betterton  
Kwan Graham  
Richard Hooker  
Paul Norcross  

Date: _ May 17, 2012_  
Date: _ May 17, 2012_  
Date: _ May 17, 2012_  
Date: _ May 17, 2012_  
Date: _____Absent_____
* Mr. Betterton left at 2:30 for a prior engagement.

A. Mission Statement and Purpose for Existence
An excellent mission statement will have the following characteristics:
- Clear, focused and compelling
- Likely to improve education outcomes
- Expressing clear guiding purposes
- Identifying priorities that meet the six legislated purposes of the NC charter school law
- Specific and measurable performance objectives, over time, outlining the school’s achievement goals
- Evidence of strong community support and stated need for the school.

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Mission Statement:

Strengths

Applicants conducted surveys and had public forums.  
Pg. 5

They do talk about the need for another charter in the area because of high wait lists at other local charter schools.  
Pg. 5

They discuss using individual PEP’s for students.  
They have specific goals.  
Pg. 10

The student information system seems like a very good program to keep everyone where they should be.  
Pg. 12

The focus meets the 6 purposes, and they have delineated these well.

Concerns and Additional Questions

There is a lot of duplication in this application of the Cabarrus County application for this EMO - Charter School USA.  
Pg. 8

The applicants make mention of using their own benchmark testing.  
How does this correlate to the state’s Common Core and EOG/EOC testing?  

For their data, it states Florida data. The sub-committee would like that information for NC states.  
Pg. 13 on the chart

B. Governance
An excellent application will demonstrate the following characteristics related to the Governance and Management plan:
- Proposed board members will contribute the wide range of experience and expertise that will be needed to oversee a successful charter school such as education, management, financial planning, law, and community outreach (including the attachment of their one page resumes)
- Clear description of selection and removal procedures, term limits, meeting schedules, and powers and duties of board members (including a conflict of interest policy)

School Name: Langtree Charter Academy
- Organizational goals and performance measures to chart
- Clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the board members, school administrators, and EMO staff (if applicable)
- Copy of the EMO management agreement (if applicable) and how the charter school board of directors will retain ultimate responsibility for the school
- Details explaining how the board evaluated the selected EMO as compared to others and how this nonprofit board will annually evaluate this relationship against measurable objectives
- Provide evidence that the proposed EMO has a history of academic and financial successes
- Plan for meaningful involvement of parents and community members in the governance of the school
- Organizational plan, with a chart, that clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for implementing the school program successfully as well as a description of entities identified on the provided chart.
- Inclusion of the organizational articles of incorporation, by laws, and conflict of interest policies that reveal clear understanding of charter school governance
- Clear description of the enrollment policy including which, if any, statutorily allowed enrollment preferences the school proposes to offer
- Explanation of criteria for enrollment decisions and the lottery process to be used
- Clear procedures for withdrawals and transfers from the school that will support an orderly transition for exiting students or a clear plan for developing such procedures

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### Governance and Operation:

**Strengths**

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### Concerns and Additional Questions

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- O. Student records cannot be the property of the organization. Applicants need to clarify this as they cannot be property owners of these records.

The teachers must be employees of the charter school’s board not the EMO. This must be amended to conform to state law.

There is not a clear line of duties and responsibilities between the EMO and the charter school board. The applicants need to clarify this and make it clear and consistent with NC State law.

There is a typo on saying “Georgia.”

The organizational chart shows that the EMO is between the board and the school employees. However, clarification on pages 40-41 shows that the EMO is responsible for day-to-day financial operations and the Foundation Board is responsible for the overall school governance. This is not consistent with the organizational chart.

There are some things that the EMO is responsible for. Clarification needs to be made on how the Board and the EMO are holding each responsible and for what.

School Name: Langtree Charter Academy
This board is the same as that for another application.

The quorum is defined as the majority of the directors present immediately before the meeting. This does not address what happens should members leave and then a majority of members is no longer present.

Clarify where the meetings will be held so that parents have access.

The board of directors cannot wave the notice of a meeting. They must follow Open Meetings Laws.

Distribution of assets must comply with charter school law.

This conflicts with the statement that the EMO is only responsible for the financial.

Defines the Foundation as totally responsible for the operations. The board must be responsible for all governance issues.

Admissions policy provides for a possible exclusion of severe/profoundly handicapped children for undue hardship? Admissions applications cannot ask screening questions. The school is required to enroll any child who is eligible for admission into a NC school. This must be changed.

The last paragraph needs to be clarified.

C. Education Program

An excellent proposal will demonstrate the following qualities related to the Educational Program:

- Alignment between the school’s mission and its goals, objectives and standards
- Goals and objectives that are clear, specific, measurable, ambitious and attainable
- Performance standards aligned with the goals as well as state and federal requirements
- The curriculum framework is clearly presented, aligned with the school’s mission, and provides an appropriate level of detail for the objectives, content, and skills for each subject and for all grades the school will serve.
- Details about the type of learning environment, class size, and teaching methods
- The curriculum is supported by research and by applicant experience.
- A clear outline of how the school will monitor the implementation of the curriculum. The plan identifies a timeline, a lead contact, action steps, and how this information will be used in facilitating professional development.
- The school day and school calendar are structured in ways that align with the educational program.
- A convincing plan for ongoing curriculum development (e.g., revision of standards and benchmarks, improvement of curriculum alignment, and assessment development) is included.
- Details in how the school will involve parents and community within the educational program.
- Describe how students that are not performing at expected levels – whether at-risk or gifted – will receive additional assistance to ensure continued student growth.
- Listing of any co-curricular or extra-curricular programs that are planned and how the applicant proposes to fund and deliver them.
- Evidence that school staff will receive focused professional development to implement the school mission and instructional methodologies.
- Provide, if a private school conversion, details about the academic success of that school as well as the rationale for wanting to become a public entity.
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<td>It is an extensive plan.</td>
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<td>Their transitional plan for 9th grade is good.</td>
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<td>The ELL program is exclusion/emersion based and must meet the individual needs of students.</td>
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D. Special Education
An excellent application will have the following characteristics regarding the plan for Serving Students with Special Needs:

- Realistic plan to identify and meet the learning needs of at-risk students, students with disabilities, gifted/talented students, and English language learners
- Timeline, lead contact, and intervention process with specific action steps for meeting learning needs of students with special needs
- Plans for serving special populations align with the overall curriculum, instructional approaches, and the school mission

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<td>In the grievance process section – It says that they can go to the authorizer, who is the State Board. The applicants need to define who they mean by “authorizer.”</td>
<td>Pg. 114</td>
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E. Student Conduct and Discipline
An excellent application will include:

- Policies for addressing expulsion, suspension and education of expelled or suspended students that provide adequately for the safety of students and staff; provide due process for students; serve the best interests of the school’s students; and create a positive environment for learning.
- Included in this plan is a description of the process for disciplining students with disabilities.
- A process for parental appeal of disciplinary decisions through a grievance procedure.
- Sample handbooks and policies already discussed by the applicant group.
F. Projected Staff

An excellent application will include:

- A description of the process that will be used to advertise for, select, and employ school leadership, instructional staff, and other employees.
- An explanation of the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees. If partnering with an EMO, a clear description of their role, if any, in the hiring/firing process.
- Qualifications and job descriptions are clearly explained; and should the applicant have already identified individuals for specific positions, resumes are provided for review.
- A plan for the development, mentorship, retention, and regular evaluation of staff that is manageable and is clearly linked to the school’s mission and educational program, including a timeline, a lead contact, and specific action steps.
- A collection of employment policies OR clear plan for timely development of such policies that will include staff grievance procedures and employment/diissmissal protocols.
- Details on how the charter school will regularly evaluate its instructional and administrative staff.

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Projected Staff: Strengths

Concerns and Additional Questions

- It says that all employees are joint employees by CSUSA and the school. This needs to be changed to be compliant with statutory requirements.

  Pgs. 118, 123, 124, 127

- The applicants say that teachers must hold a bachelor’s degree but not certification. Then they say that they will all be certified. Does this mean 100% or complying with state law on certification percentages?

  Pg. 122

- The applicants say that CSUSA will handle all grievances and promotions. They must comply with state law saying that the board has the final decisions.

  Pg. 134

- Applicants need to understand that the ultimate responsibility for

  Pg. 126

School Name: Langtree Charter Academy
teacher hiring lies with the board.

G. Enrollment and Business Plan
An excellent proposal will present a Business Plan with the following characteristics:
- Budget assumptions and financial planning based on realistic revenue and expenditure projections for five years based on minimum enrollment needed for solvency as well as at 100% enrollment
- Spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, curriculum, and plans for management, professional development, and growth
- Maintenance of a small, contingency reserve
- Budget format as prescribed by the application that reveals realistic cash flow projection for the first year of operation including a plan for funding cash flow shortfalls
- Sound financial management systems
- Adequate and reasonable plan to manage start-up costs
- Description of how the school will conduct an annual audit of the financial (including the name and contact information for auditing firm) and programmatic operations
- Details on how the school plans to market itself to ensure equal access by all students
- Results of any surveys or demographic studies performed by the applicant to create this proposal.
- Dates, times, or locations of meetings held to talk about this proposal with members of the public to ascertain the level of public interest in the proposed charter school
- An evaluation of the impact this charter school would have on nearby public schools
- Provided information about how the school proposes to comply with the statute to mirror the diversity of the local education agency after its first year of operation.
- Definitive policies and procedures for recruiting, registering, and admitting students that reflect the racial composition of the school district or targeted school population.

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Enrollment and Business Plan: Strengths

Concerns and Additional Questions
Charter school USA’s fees are not consistent. It says 15% and then 16%.

No financial auditor listed.

In the budget, the first year the income is less than the expenses. The applicants should not operate at a deficit. There is an inconsistency in their numbers. These need to be clarified between what is shown on the different pages.

H. Insurance and Transportation
An excellent application will provide
- Adequate assurance that the school will meet applicable insurance requirements.
- Statement regarding whether the school plans to provide transportation for its pupils

School Name: Langtree Charter Academy
and, if so,

- Clear description of how the school plans to meet the transportation needs of its pupils
- Viable plan specifically addressing transportation needs of low-income and academically low-achieving students that is also reflected in the proposed budget

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**Insurance and Transportation:**

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**Concerns and Additional Questions**

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<th>What are you going to do for students who cannot get to the school through car pooling? There cannot be a barrier to attending the school. Be more specific. How are you going to help students who cannot get to the school?</th>
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**I. Facilities and Equipment**

An excellent Facility plan will have the following characteristics:

If a facility has been identified –

- Designation of the proposed facility
- Evidence that the facility will be appropriate for the educational program of the school and adequate for the projected student enrollment
- Adequate reflection of the costs associated with the proposed facility in the budget, including rent, utilities, and maintenance
- Assurance that the proposed facility will be in compliance with applicable building codes, health and safety laws, and with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- A sound plan to identify needed renovations as well as the funds and a timeline for the completion of those renovations
- Contingency plans should this facility not be completed in time for the school to open as planned.

If a facility has not yet been identified –

- Description of anticipated facilities needs including evidence that the facility will be appropriate for the educational program of the school and adequate for the projected student enrollment
- Inclusion of costs associated with the anticipated facilities needs in the budget, including rent, utilities, and maintenance
- Evidence to indicate that facilities-related budget assumptions are realistic based on anticipated location, size, etc.
- Assurance that the proposed location will be in compliance with applicable building codes, health and safety laws, and with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Plan for finding a location, including a proposed schedule for doing so
- Contingency plans should this facility not be completed in time for the school to open as planned

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J. Health and Safety Requirements
An excellent health and safety plan will contain:

- Descriptions of the health and safety procedures that ensure compliance with state and federal laws or requirements such as fire and safety regulations, diabetes care plans, and student immunizations.
- Details concerning the school's crisis plan and dealing with bloodborne pathogens and/or hazardous chemicals.
- Evidence that the school will provide students in grades 9-12 with information on the state's safe surrender laws and how they will notify parents of the availability of various vaccines at the beginning of each year.
- Explanation, if applicable, how the school will comply with food inspections within their cafeteria or food distribution process.

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OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Would you, as a subcommittee, recommend an interview for this application? Remember that a subcommittee is not a quorum of the whole Council and has no authority to bind the Council to a particular recommendation. This rubric, and the following recommendation, is simply a starting point for Council deliberations regarding which applicants to invite back for an interview.

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If the recommendation is “no,” provide comments in the appropriate section detailing the reason(s) for not recommending an interview.

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