

# Maine Charter School Commission

## Start-Up Plan and Pre-Opening Requirements

SCHOOL: Ecology Learning Center

DATE OF CHARTER APPROVAL: by November 15, 2019

TARGET SCHOOL OPENING DATE: September 8, 2020

### WHAT ARE START-UP AND PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENTS?

Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements are a set of primarily compliance-based actions that a school must complete prior to opening its doors and starting instruction. Schools must demonstrate sufficient demand (enrolled students) to warrant school opening. In addition, schools must demonstrate that the physical building and staff are ready to receive students for instruction. Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements consist of a combination of paper screening of compliance documents and an on-site visit to the school site to verify school leadership is prepared to begin the school year ready to educate students in alignment with the approved mission of the school, and that the facility and site logistics are on track for the first day of class.

### WHAT CONSTITUTES A START-UP OR PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENT?

Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements are the set of tasks that, once completed, will facilitate effective and responsible management of school operations, as well as assist charter schools in coming into general compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Although charter school operators will likely identify additional tasks to complete during the critical time between charter authorization and the opening of the school, the tasks included in the Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements alert school founders to those tasks that are essential to school start-up and operations. The Maine Charter School Commission may also identify Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements specific to individual schools that are beyond those included here. Start-Up and Pre-Opening requirements will be formally established, as part of the initial charter contract, to ensure their transparency and enforceability.

### HOW ARE START-UP AND PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENTS ORGANIZED?

Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements are organized by general categories, including: students, enrollment, and admissions; governance; budget; and transportation, among others. Each requirement has a due date. The “Documentation” column indicates for school operators the specific documentation required to fulfill particular terms. Finally, the template includes a column for authorizers to verify whether schools have met each requirement.

## HOW WILL THE COMMISSION MONITOR SCHOOLS' COMPLETION OF START-UP AND PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENTS?

The Commission monitors the completion of Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements through each school's timely and complete submission of appropriate documentation, as indicated within the template. In addition, the Commission will conduct a site visit to the school facility prior to each school's first day of instruction. The initial visit is typically six to eight weeks before the first day, with potential follow-up visits scheduled closer to the start date if necessary. It is critical to determine whether a school is prepared to open as early as possible in the process, in case there is a delay and the school and/or authorizer need to notify enrolling students. Regular contact with charter school operators can also inform the Commission about the progress each charter school is making toward completing the Start-Up and Pre-Opening Requirements. Ultimately, the Commission will provide written affirmation to schools that have met all Pre-Opening Requirements.

Failure to submit required documentation in a sufficient and timely manner may result in the Commission taking action to postpone the opening of the school or revoke its charter. Additional documentation may be required prior to the start of the school year. The authorizer will provide written notice and a reasonable timeline for response to any additional requirements and/or changes to the following list. ALL DOCUMENTATION AND NOTIFICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EPICENTER.

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
Students, Enrollment, and Admissions	Enrollment and admissions policies are approved by school board, <i>if different from materials approved by the authorizer in the original application</i>	November 15, 2019	Enrollment and admissions policy and procedures  Enrollment form	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board-approved student code of conduct is on file and provided to students and families in a Student and Family Handbook.	November 15, 2019	Board-approved code of conduct  Copy of Student and Family Handbook	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	School has procedures in place for creating, storing, securing, and using student academic, attendance, and discipline records	July 1, 2020	Evidence of protocols/systems for student records	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
	Student admissions lottery conducted according to rules and regulations and waitlist maintained appropriately <i>(if applicable)</i>	February 5, 2020	Lottery date and copy of lottery procedures.  Wait list numbers by grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Student Recruitment		Dates and locations of enrollment events/ meetings with number of attendees at each event.  Copies of mailings, publications, and flyers with description of use/purpose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	50% of student enrollment target met	June 1, 2020	Number of enrolled students by grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	80% of student enrollment target met	July 1, 2020	Number of enrolled students by grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	90% of student enrollment target met	August 1, 2020	Number of enrolled students by grade.  If a school does not reach 90% of planned enrollment well in advance of school opening, the school must submit a revised budget <i>(see "Budget" section)</i> and may be at risk of not opening.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
Governance				
	Charter contract executed by Board	December 31, 2019	Board-executed charter contract	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Organization is incorporated as a not-for-profit	December 31, 2019	Copy of charter holder's certificate of incorporation or similar documentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Organization has secured federal tax-exempt status	December 31, 2019	Copy of tax exempt letter and federal tax id number from IRS	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Bylaws are executed by the board, <i>if different from materials approved by the authorizer in the original application.</i>	June 1, 2020	Copy of executed bylaws	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Updated board roster (with officer designations) and organizational chart updated	August 15, 2020	Board roster, new board member forms and organizational chart	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board meeting (s) conducted	monthly, starting September 2018	Meeting dates and copy of board meeting minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Adoption of all required policies	August 1, 2020	Copy of policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board Training completed	July 1, 2020	Date and agenda of training	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
<b>Educational Program</b>				
	School calendar is final	June 1, 2020	School calendar including all key dates	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
<b>Administration and Staff</b>				
	Qualified school administrator hired	July 15, 2020	Name, resume, and copies of administrator license(s) and Criminal History Record Check Approval from Maine Department of Education.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	All key administrative/leadership roles filled (ex. Dean of Students, CFO, Special Education Director, etc.)	August 1, 2020	Updated organizational or staffing chart with names filled in for all administrative/leadership roles.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	All positions filled including: paraprofessional, clerical, janitorial, support staff, substitute teachers, Nurse, Doctor/NP, etc.	August 15, 2020	Copy of staff roster	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Criminal History Record Check Approval completed through MDOE for all school staff and volunteers.	September 1, 2020	Staff information entered into MDOE portal  <i>Note: Staff <u>may not</u> work without CHRC approval</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
	Employees meet certification requirements	At the time of employee hire	Copies of valid teaching and ed. tech. certification and a list of those obtaining certification within 3 years of hire and those meeting criteria for unique qualifications as applicable.  <i>Note: Special Education teachers must hold valid certification and are not eligible for 3 year certification or unique qualifications.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Adequate Special Education and English Learner (EL) staffing in place to serve enrolled students	August 15, 2020	Documentation of number of students identified as requiring Special Education or EL services and indication of how staffing will meet student needs in accordance with law and IEPs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Initial Orientation and Professional Development scheduled to occur prior to the start of school year	September 1, 2020	Orientation and PD calendar and agenda(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board-approved personnel policies are provided to all staff in an Employee Handbook	July 1, 2020	Board-approved personnel policies  Copy of Employee Handbook	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
Management Contract (if applicable)				
	Management contract executed	N/A	Copy of executed agreement and signed by representatives of the management company and the school's board	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
Budget				
	Board-approved budget for first fiscal year	July 1, 2020	Copy of board-approved budget with detailed assumptions for all key revenues and expenditures	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board-approved five-year budget	August 1, 2020	Copy of board-approved five-year budget aligned to provisions of approved charter application	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Detailed monthly cash-flow projection for first year of operation	August 1, 2020	Copy of monthly cash flow projections	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Revised budget <u>if enrollment is below 90% of student enrollment target</u> included in board-approved budget. If revised budget does not demonstrate viability, the authorizer will delay or stop school opening.	August 15, 2020	Revised budget that demonstrates fiscal viability of school and ability to fulfill material terms of the approved educational program with reduced enrollment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
<b>Financial Management</b>				
	Completed necessary state documents and requirements to generate payments	July 1, 2020	Certification that documents and requirements are complete	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Board-approved fiscal controls policies and procedures	July 1, 2020	Copy of board-approved internal controls policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Accounting system in place	July 1, 2020	Evidence of employment of or contract with accountant, bookkeeper, or person who will handle such duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
<b>Facility</b>				
	Viable facility secured	May 1, 2020	Executed lease or copy of deed with physical address of viable facility	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Certificate of Occupancy	August 1, 2020	Certificate of Occupancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Emergency Plan finalized	August 15, 2020	Copy of emergency plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing of drinking and cooking water fixtures</li> <li>• Testing of interior water lines</li> <li>• Testing of exterior water lines</li> </ul> <p>Based on:  <a href="https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/dwp/cet/documents/samplingProtocolForLeadSchools.pdf">https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/dwp/cet/documents/samplingProtocolForLeadSchools.pdf</a></p>	August 15, 2020	Documentation and results of each test	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments
	Fire and Asbestos Inspections, Lead Paint and PCBs Assessment	August 15, 2020	Documentation of inspections and assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments
	Office and classroom equipment, furnishings and fixtures and installations complete	August 15, 2020	Inspection during pre-opening visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments
	Space meets program requirements to execute material elements of the education program (classrooms, technology, special purpose space, and restrooms meet requirements of program and number of students enrolled)	August 15, 2020	Floor plan Inspection during pre-opening visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Space is accessible to all students and complies with anticipated IEP requirements	August 15, 2020	Inspection during pre-opening visit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
<b>Transportation</b>				
	Contract with transportation provider ( <i>as applicable</i> )	August 1, 2020	Copy of agreement with transportation provider ( <i>as applicable</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
	Final transportation plan documentation ( <i>if applicable</i> ) including related health and safety certificates	August 15, 2020	Copy of health and safety certificates  Copies of criminal background checks for provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

Category	Benchmark	Due Date	Documentation	Approved by Authorizer
<b>Food Service</b>				
	Food service plan <i>(if applicable)</i>	August 1, 2020	Copy of food or vendor services contract  Evidence of appropriate state and local health department inspections and licenses	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:
<b>Insurance</b>				
	Appropriate and required coverage obtained	July 1, 2020	Proof of appropriate coverage from insurance provider that meets local and statutory requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Comments:

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