



AUTHORIZER EVALUATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State Charter School Commission of Georgia | January 27, 2023

OVERVIEW

Georgia law requires an annual review of all charter school authorizers, to assess their “adherence to the principles and standards of charter school authorizing practices” approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE) (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063.3). The Georgia State Charter School Commission developed an evaluation tool based on the 15 standards of quality practices in the [Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing](#) approved in December 2021. This evaluation assesses the authorizer’s core responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity
2. The Petition Process
3. Performance Contracting
4. Oversight and Evaluation
5. Renewal and Termination

The Commission partnered with the [National Association of Charter School Authorizers](#) in 2022-23 to revise its evaluation tool and undergo a pilot evaluation. The attached evaluation is the culmination of a process, which included an extensive document review, data analysis, surveys, multiple conversations and discussions with the authorizing staff, and a two-day site visit, during which the evaluation team interviewed authorizing staff, leadership, and board members.

This evaluation was designed to provide the Commission with a reflective, formative analysis of its primary strengths, priorities for improvement, and recommendations for moving forward. Use of this critical feedback is intended to strengthen existing practices and accelerate the adoption of others that will lead to stronger outcomes for students and communities.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (Commission) is a quality authorizer, imbued with commitment, leadership, and judgment. The Commission was rated exemplary on each standard. Most of the recommendations for growth for the Commission are within the advanced criteria included in the pilot evaluation tool.

The commitment of commissioners and staff were evident throughout the evaluation. They talk clearly and passionately about when, why, and how they make difficult authorizing decisions. They’re comfortable working diligently within the natural tension arising from the different interests, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses of all the stakeholders involved in the education of Georgia’s young people. Staff demonstrated deep understanding of their

role as an authorizer: to foster accountability, to protect schools' agency and autonomy, and, when appropriate, to serve as a support for schools. Staff works to connect schools to sources of deeper support (i.e., the Georgia Charter Schools Association) without providing them with the "how" and "what".

The commission staff is led by a respected and dedicated executive director. Staff members praised the executive director for creating an effective and supportive work environment. Commissioners take the time to evaluate the executive director and provide actionable feedback. And the executive director is continually building the capacity and effectiveness of the staff to carry out the Commission's authorizing work.

The Commission demonstrated strengths in each area of the charter lifecycle: petition process, performance contracting, oversight and evaluation, and renewal and termination. The judgment of commission staff is evident in each stage of the charter lifecycle. Extensive training and resources are provided to prospective charter school petitioners. Pre-opening expectations are communicated clearly. Staff partner with other organizations to help authorized schools navigate challenges inherent in opening a new school (e.g., facilities, enrollment). Neither staff nor commissioners shy away from gathering information necessary to determine whether a school is prepared to open and successfully serve students from the start.

The Commission can increase its short and long-term effectiveness and sustainability by making improvements in a few areas:

- Bringing critical expertise in house by filling currently open positions, particularly to increase the commission's capacity around areas regarding finance and facilities. (The Commission staff already work diligently to ensure that no one staff member's absence is a bottleneck for decision-making and oversight.)
- Adding staff members with school or network leadership experience.
- Making more of the pre-opening expectations actionable so petitioners focus their energies on work most likely to effect on time school opening.
- Systematizing training for staff and commissioners to ensure uniform understanding and competency.
- Improving transparency by making more resources accessible via the website.
- Commissioners and staff may also benefit from a review of the factors that affect staff recommendations and the ultimate decisions by Commissioners. Instances when the Commission votes contrary to staff recommendations provide opportunities for a review of the strategic direction of the Commission. Such reviews can productively inform future staff recommendations and foster increased understanding.



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Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Overview

Georgia law requires an annual review of all charter school authorizers, to assess their “adherence to the principles and standards of charter school authorizing practices” approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE).¹ This evaluation tool is based on the 15 standards of quality practices in the [Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing](#) approved in December 2021.

This evaluation instrument outlines the legally required annual review of each Georgia charter school authorizer. This document is written for evaluators who have deep experience in authorizing *and* for evaluators with relevant expertise but limited experience applying that expertise in the public charter school context.

In order to provide direction and clarity for evaluators and to make the results actionable for authorizers, this evaluation organizes the 15 Georgia standards into five (5) main categories. The categories are introduced using the following guiding questions:

- I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity
 - a. Does the authorizer organize and retain a professional team with the subject matter expertise necessary to carry out the authorizer’s obligations?
 - b. Does the authorizer manage financial resources to support charter schools and clearly communicate how funds are allocated to schools pursuant to Georgia law?
- II. The Petition Process
 - a. Does the authorizer provide appropriate guidance and assistance to petitioners applying to open a new school?
 - b. Does the authorizer engage teams of qualified individuals to review petitions?
 - c. Does the authorizer clearly communicate the competency and capacity required for petition approval and make decisions based solely on those criteria?
- III. Performance Contracting
 - a. Does the authorizer publish clear requirements to ensure schools can open on time?
 - b. Do performance contracts between the authorizer and schools define each party’s obligations, reinforce the high standards required for renewal in for academic, financial, and operational performance, and identify any services to be provided under separate agreement?
 - c. Does the authorizer meet its contract obligations as established by Georgia law?
- IV. Oversight and Evaluation
 - a. Does the authorizer protect the public interest by holding schools accountable for governance, management, and stewardship of public funds?
 - b. Does the authorizer give schools timely notice of deficiencies or contract violations, and provide them time for remediation, prior to taking further action?
 - c. Does the authorizer uphold school autonomy in organizing, staffing, and delivering educational programs in pursuit of measurable outcomes for students?
- V. Renewal and Termination
 - a. Does the authorizer use a rigorous renewal process and clearly communicate criteria for renewal, non-renewal, or termination of contracts?
 - b. Does the authorizer base renewal decisions primarily on objective measures of student achievement?

¹ 2019 Georgia Code Title 20 – Education Chapter 2 - Elementary and Secondary Education Article 31 - Charter Schools Act of 1998 §20-2-2063.3. Code of principles and standards for charter school authorizers.

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- c. Does the authorizer follow a closure protocol that enables orderly transitions for students and staff, and careful disposition of school funds and assets?

Each standard is graded in a completed evaluation rubric. One rubric is completed for each authorizer. The completed rubric rates the authorizer on each standard, includes any relevant evaluative comments, and provides an overall quality rating.

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Ratings and Evaluation Criteria

The process for evaluating authorizer practices and rating each authorizer is described and illustrated in an example table below.

Evaluators rate authorizers on each of the 15 standards using 1-6 evaluation criteria chosen based on their importance to the Georgia authorizing landscape. In making their decisions, evaluators rely on the following types of evidence:

- Documentation provided by the authorizer,
- A debrief and/or observations of the authorizer in practice, and
- Other interactions with stakeholders, such as school surveys or focus groups.

The evaluation process is designed to allow evaluators to conduct their evaluation in a reasonable time frame, to limit interruption to the normal operations of the authorizer and the schools in the authorizer’s portfolio. Thus, evaluators complete as much of the evaluation as possible by reviewing existing documents. Surveys and other stakeholder interactions are limited and built as much as possible around existing workstreams and convenings. Meeting with the authorizer and, if appropriate, observing the authorizer staff and board in action, provide evaluators context and help them answer remaining questions.

Using this comprehensive body of evidence and their professional judgment, evaluators determine a Yes/No designation based on whether the evidence indicates that the authorizer has demonstrated adherence to Georgia’s Principles and Standards for Quality Authorizing. For some criteria, depending on the evidence provided, evaluators will be able to easily select a designation of Yes or No. For other criteria, evaluators will need to carefully weigh the evidence provided and use their expertise and professional judgment to choose the appropriate designation.

Some criteria will not be applicable to authorizers in the state of Georgia (such as Standard 5, Criteria 4). In these cases, evaluators should rate that criteria as “Yes” automatically.

Three examples are provided below, using the same standard, to illustrate how designations are made in light of the evidence available.

Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity					
Standard 1. Human Resources. The authorizer identifies appropriate personnel to carry out its authorizing obligations, including the point(s) of contact who will coordinate charter school support.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).					

Example A

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

The authorizer provided staff bios and resumes that demonstrated diverse expertise and cumulative depth of experience in charter authorizing and operations. School surveys indicated satisfaction with the staff’s ability to fulfill their authorizing function and support schools appropriately. The authorizer debrief confirmed the experience and capacity of the staff.

In this case, the evaluators can easily designate Yes for this criterion.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation aligns with the standard.	Schools rated the authorizer highly.	Staff demonstrated a wide range of relevant experience.	The authorizer clarified any misconceptions.	Yes

Example B

The authorizer did not provide current bios or resumes for all staff. The resumes provided were outdated and had only limited charter school or authorizing experience. It was not clear from the documentation how long each staff member had served on the authorizing team. School surveys reflected significant dissatisfaction with the staff. One school board member said, “it feels like we’re constantly having to train the authorizing staff on their jobs and what charter schools are.” The authorizer debrief did not allay any of the concerns manifested in the documentation review or school surveys.

In this case, the evaluators can easily designate No for this criterion.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation was incomplete and did not meet the standard.	Schools rated the authorizer poorly.	Staffers could not speak to office policies or procedures.	The debrief did not provide any additional evidence to meet the standard.	No

Example C

Current bios and resumes for all authorizing staff were submitted. The resumes showed deep education experience but limited charter school experience. School surveys were mixed regarding satisfaction with the staff’s ability to fulfill their authorizing function and support schools appropriately. One respondent noted, “The authorizing office connects us to experts across the district to help us with specific needs like Federal Programs compliance.” During the authorizer debrief, the staff explained how they work with experts across the district and showed an organization chart each authorizing team member uses to ensure regular communication with school district staff who support the charter schools.

In this case, the evaluators may recognize the shared allocation of resources that enables the authorizer to fulfill its functions. The evaluator can therefore designate Yes for this criterion.

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Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation showed some relevant experience.	School satisfaction was mixed, but schools appreciate access to district experts for support.	Processes clearly outlined and staff were following them appropriately.	Staff explained how they rely on experts across the district to fulfill all functions.	Yes

Guiding Questions

These examples are intended to show how evaluators can, keeping some guiding questions in mind, rate authorizers on each criterion in consistent ways. Evaluators should use questions like these throughout the process:

1. Did the relevant documentation describe authorizing practices that are consistent with the evaluation criteria and quality authorizing standard?
2. Did the school survey responses support the authorizer’s documented practices? In other words, is there a disparity between the authorizer’s perception of how well it adheres to a standard and the perception of school board members or leaders regarding the same?
3. Did the authorizer’s verbal commentary align with their documented processes and the relevant quality authorizing practice?
4. If the evaluators observed the authorizer in practice, did the authorizer’s practices adhere to its stated procedures or policies?

The evaluation team must include details in the appropriate section of the rubric explaining the rationale behind each designation and note where there is misalignment between the standard, the authorizer’s documentation, schools’ responses, and authorizer commentary.

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Rating the Standard

Every authorizer is assigned a rating on each of the 15 standards. The three ratings are:

1. Needs Improvement (NI),
2. Adequate (AD), or
3. Exemplary (EX).

The number of evaluation criteria met determines the authorizer's rating. Each standard has a different number of associated evaluation criteria. Thus, the number of criteria required to earn a particular rating varies from standard to standard as illustrated within the rubric (See Table A, above, as an example). However, an authorizer that met no criteria will always earn a Needs Improvement rating for the relevant standard. And an authorizer that met all criteria will earn an Exemplary rating for the relevant standard.²

Overall Rating

In addition to receiving a rating on each standard, every authorizer is assigned an overall rating of Needs Improvement (NI), Adequate (AD) or Exemplary (EX)³. The overall rating is determined by the number of NI, AD, and EX ratings the authorizer received across all 15 Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing. This is outlined in Table B, below.

Districts in their first year of authorizing will receive a rating for each standard but will not receive an overall rating. Instead, they will be designated as a First Time Authorizer (FTA).⁴ This allows new authorizers to develop and improve their practices before being subject to the consequences related to receiving an overall rating of NI.

Table A. Overall Rating Scoring Table

OVERALL RATING (Across all 15 Standards)	
Rating	Criteria
Needs Improvement (NI)	Earned a majority (8 or more) NI ratings across all standards
Adequate (AD)	Earned any combination of ratings across standards expect as designated for NI or E
Exemplary (EX)	Earned a majority (8 or more) E ratings and no NI ratings across all standards
First Time Authorizer (FTA)	Authorizer in its first year of authorizing

Per Georgia law § 20-2-2063.3, a charter school authorized by a local board of education that fails to meet the principles and standards of charter school authorizing on its annual evaluation for two consecutive years may petition to transfer its charter authorization to the SCSC. An overall rating of NI is the equivalent of failing to meet principles and standards of charter school authorizing. In any year an authorizer receives a NI rating, the SBOE may require the authorizer to submit a corrective action plan to remedies the areas of deficiencies identified in the evaluation process.

² The exception is, if only one evaluation criterion are associated with the given standard, then the authorizer will earn an Adequate rating.

³ The overall rating categories are established in SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 Charter Authorizers, Financing, Management, And Governance Training.

⁴ The overall rating category of First Time Authorizer is established in SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 Charter Authorizers, Financing, Management, And Governance Training.

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Table B. Example of a completed Georgia Authorizer Evaluation Rubric for one standard

Standard 2. Financial Resources. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089, the authorizer allocates the required financial resources to support charter schools, treats charter schools no less favorably than other local schools within the system unless otherwise provided by law, and provides transparency on the availability and allocation of charter school funding.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer clearly publishes and shares the calculation of current and anticipated public funding for each charter school in accordance with law, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GaDOE/SBOE/SCSC- district allotment sheets - Local Districts- allotment sheet itemizing the calculation of state, local and federal allocations to be provided. 	Authorizer has posted to website under financial reports.	School did not respond with conflicting or negative information.	Staff understood the process as published.	Authorizer described a reasonable timeline for annually publishing.	Y
Withholds no more than the legally allowable administration fee	As demonstrated on financial statements.	Affirmed	N/A	Affirmed	Y
The authorizer publishes a budget reflecting the total amount received from any authorizing fees and other sources, and how those funds are allocated. The authorizer publishes the administrative services provided based on the administrative fees withheld.	Budget was submitted, but not published on website.	School suggested that the authorizer over allocates monies to administrative tasks.	Authorizer’s description of services to schools was unclear.	The debrief did not provide any additional evidence to meet the standard.	N
Number of Criteria Met:	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
	0-1	2	3	AD	

Advanced Criteria

To encourage the development of transformational authorizing practices, advanced criteria have been added to supplement the evaluation of the Georgia standards. These advanced practices are aligned with national best practices. As such, these standards will **not** receive a rating of Needs Improvement, Adequate, or Exemplary, rather evaluators will provide at least one strength and one weakness based on findings from the documentation review, authorizer debrief, and school survey. The advanced criteria feedback will **not** impact the overall rating provided to an authorizer.

Evaluation Team

Evaluation teams should be comprised of at least two individuals with relevant expertise, and without a current relationship with the authorizer that could be perceived as a conflict of interest. The evaluation team may divide the evaluation roles and tasks among its members as it sees fit. However, in order to ensure clear, consistent communication and reduce duplicative messaging, one member of the evaluation team shall serve as the lead for each

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authorizer evaluation and act as the main point of contact for the authorizer, local boards of education and related charter schools. The evaluation team leader will have the following responsibilities:

- Send the updated relevant documents table to the authorizer after the initial website pull has been conducted,
- Consolidate the evaluation team's school survey follow-up questions and send them to the school,
- Navigate any responses to the survey,
- Consolidate the evaluation team's authorizer debrief questions,
- Lead the authorizer debrief conversation, and
- Share the final version of the evaluation rubric with the authorizer.

The authorizer must also designate a single point of contact to verify accuracy of information used by the evaluation team.

Evaluation Process

The authorizer evaluation process includes five main components:

1. Orientation,
2. Authorizer & School Surveys,
3. Relevant Authorizing Documents,
4. Authorizer Debrief, and
5. Rubric Completion.

Each component is described in more detail and an accompanying timeline is provided, below. The final product of the evaluation is a completed rubric (one for each authorizer) that assesses a charter authorizer's performance against the 15 Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing.

Orientation

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is required to provide for or approve training for its staff and local board of education members on the approved principles and standards.⁵ At least one member of each authorizing office must attend. While not required, supplemental learning materials that incorporate the Georgia context can be found in the [Georgia Authorizer Training learning suite here](#). Although not required in law, the SCSC will host an orientation to the evaluation process for its staff and the evaluation team prior to the evaluation start date. SCSC staff will also communicate with schools about the evaluation, timeline, and related requests. This training will cover the evaluation process, the authorizer rating structure, timelines, and due dates. Orientation should be completed no later than the month before an evaluation cycle start date. Related documentation and timelines will also be shared with charter school leaders prior to the evaluation cycle start date.

School Surveys and Focus Groups

All approved (operational and pre-opening) charter schools will be asked complete an [authorizer evaluation school survey](#). The survey questions align with standards and evaluation criteria included in the evaluation rubric. The survey is an opportunity for schools to explain their experiences with the authorizer and identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. Evaluators do not need to capture all comments or survey results in the evaluation rubric. However, evaluators should include results that highlight strengths or weaknesses, and comments that provide actionable insights for the authorizer. If additional information is needed for the evaluation team to rate the authorizer on all criteria, the evaluation team may send follow up questions and ask schools to submit documentation to support claims in the survey responses. This is particularly important when a school rates an authorizers' practice negatively but provides no rationale or documentation

⁵ Georgia law §20-2-2063.3. Part D.

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supporting the response. The evaluation team lead will request follow-up responses from respondents, as necessary. When follow up questions or additional documentation are used to determine ratings, evaluators should note that in the rubric. Instead of conducting direct survey follow up, evaluators may convene a school leader focus group to address questions raised by survey responses.

Relevant Authorizing Documents

Evaluators will gather as much of the required documentation as possible from the authorizer's website. Then, evaluators will [request outstanding](#) documents from the [Relevant Documents Table](#). Whenever appropriate, the evaluation team will give the authorizer discretion to select which documents the authorizer believes most clearly demonstrate the authorizer's adherence to the relevant criteria or standard. The authorizer is required to submit all remaining documents or, if applicable, a link to where the document is publicly available. The evaluation team will make notes and add ratings to each authorizer's evaluation rubric based on their initial review of the collected documents. The evaluation team will compile follow-up questions to ask the authorizer, especially when submitted documentation is unclear, incomplete, inconsistent, or conflicts with school survey responses. The evaluation team lead will consolidate and send follow up questions to the authorizer prior to the scheduled authorizer debrief discussion.

Authorizer Debrief

The authorizer debrief is an opportunity for the authorizer to identify how the submitted documentation demonstrates adherence to Georgia's standards, as measured by the evaluation rubric. The debrief discussion allows the authorizer to verbally explain processes and protocols, and to respond to any concerns the team derived from relevant school survey responses.

The evaluation team lead will contact the authorizer at the beginning of the evaluation to schedule a debrief discussion. Debrief discussions should occur within the timeframe indicated in the timeline below. The evaluation team lead will consolidate all questions, comments, and potential questions or concerns arising from the document review and school surveys and will send this information to the authorizer well before the debrief discussion. Following the debrief discussion, each evaluation team member will update their rubric considering additional understanding gained and evidence gathered.

Rubric Completion

This evaluation process relies on expert evaluators using the provided rubric to clearly and uniformly provide a rating for each Georgia authorizer on the 15 [Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing](#). During and after each stage of the evaluation process team members will make notes in the appropriate section of their individual GAE Rubric, identifying areas of misalignment between the standard quality practice as defined in the GAE rubric, the authorizer documentation, school feedback from survey responses and authorizer verbal commentary provided during the debrief. Once all authorizer debrief discussions have concluded, the evaluation team shall convene to discuss and review their individual assessments of authorizer performance. Individual team member rubrics will be used to draft a final comprehensive rubric for each authorizer at the end of the evaluation process. The evaluation team must come to a consensus for the overall rating for each authorizer as well as the rating for each standard for each authorizer. Authorizers will receive one completed evaluation rubric that incorporates the feedback from the evaluation team as a whole.

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Timeline

The evaluation cycle is estimated to last up to 10 weeks. Specific duties for each party are outlined by week (and day if applicable) in the table below. The evaluation team may adjust timelines if needed; however, school and authorizer deadlines must not be shortened unless agreed to by all parties. The process is ideally situated to occur in the summer months when districts and schools are not in session. Annually the SBOE will share specific dates and times for the evaluation process during the orientation training for local districts and authorizers. Orientation shall occur in the month prior to the evaluation cycle.

Week	Dates	Key Activities		
		Evaluation Team	Authorizers	Charter Schools
0 (At least one month prior to evaluation)		Attend authorizer hosted orientation to evaluation process.	Host orientation for staff and evaluation team. Notify schools about evaluation, timeline, and requests. Send additional documentation if applicable.	
1		Conduct desk audit (pull relevant documents from websites and request additional documents from authorizer). Ask identified school staff to complete School Survey.	Complete authorizer survey.	School Survey Completion
2		Independently review documentation and survey responses; Begin filling out authorizer evaluation rubric.	Send outstanding relevant documents to evaluation team.	School Survey Completion (responses due by end of week)

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3		Independently review documentation and survey responses; Begin filling out authorizer evaluation rubric	Submit draft site visit schedule to evaluator for review.	
4		Independently review documentation and survey responses; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric Draft and compile school survey follow-up questions		Participate in evaluation site visit - school leader focus group.
5		Independently review documentation and survey responses; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric. Send compiled list of survey follow-up questions (from all evaluators) to applicable schools. Schedule authorizer debrief discussions. Conduct site visit (finalize schedule, travel to authorizer, conduct interviews and focus groups, observe authorizer practices, and/or conduct customized meetings).	Participate in evaluation site visit - staff and board interviews and observations.	Compile response(s) to survey follow-up question(s) and send to evaluation team.
6		Independently review answers to survey follow-up questions; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric Evaluation team meets to consolidate individual rubrics into one rubric for the		

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		authorizer and draft questions to discuss in the authorizer debrief.		
7		Draft authorizer documentation debrief questions and send to authorizer, along with draft consolidated rubric.	Review debrief questions and draft evaluation rubric and prepare for authorizer debrief discussion (compile factual corrections and any supplemental information).	
8		Finalize preparations for authorizer debrief discussion.	Review debrief questions and draft evaluation rubric and prepare for authorizer debrief discussion (compile factual corrections and any supplemental information).	
9		Conduct authorizer debrief discussions.	Participate in authorizer debrief discussions.	
10		Finalize and share evaluation rubrics with the authorizer.		
Date determined by the authorizer		Present and discuss evaluation findings with board or decision-making body	Participate in discussion of evaluation findings with board or decision-making body.	

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Appendix

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Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Rubric

Authorizer Name:

Date:

SUMMARY	RATING
Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity	
1. Human Resources	
2. Financial Resources	
Category II. The Petition Process	
3. Petition Application	
4. Petition Review	
5. Petition Decisions	
Category III. Performance Contracting	
6. Pre-Opening Period	
7. Performance Standards	
8. Contract Terms and Agreements	
9. Authorizer Obligations	
Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation	
10. Compliance Monitoring	
11. Intervention	
12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy	
Category V. Renewal and Termination	
13. Renewal Process	
14. Renewal Decisions	
15. Closure/Termination	
OVERALL RATING	

OVERALL RATING CRITERIA	
Rating	Criteria
Needs Improvement (NI)	Earned a majority NI (8 or more) across all standards
Adequate (AD)	Earned any combination of ratings across standards expect as designated for NI or E
Exemplary (EX)	Earned a majority E (8 or more) and no NI across all standards
First Time Authorizer (FTA)	Charter authorizer in its first year of authorizing

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity					
Standard 1. Human Resources. The authorizer identifies appropriate personnel to carry out its authorizing obligations, including the point(s) of contact who will coordinate charter school support.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer has dedicated staff to supporting the charter schools in its portfolio.</p> <p>Whether staff are dedicated solely to charter school authorizing or have other duties, sufficient staff time and resources are allocated for the authorizer to fulfill its obligations, in light of the number of schools in the portfolio.</p>					
<p>Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).</p>					
<p>The roles and responsibilities of the authorizing office cover key responsibilities in a coherent structure, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petition receipt and review, - Oversight of academic, financial, and operational performance, and - Designated point of contact for charter stakeholder inquiries. 					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3		
<p>Evaluator Comments:</p>					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>The authorizer demonstrates its commitment to high-quality authorizing by building a healthy organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational values (behavioral expectations) are explicit and enforced. - If applicable, authorizing is a visibly important function of the larger “parent” organization. - Staffing supports the authorizer’s goals and plans for the future. 		
<p>Employment and management practices attract and retain a diverse, effective team of authorizing professionals. This includes leadership and professional development, clear decision-making criteria, and effective onboarding.</p>		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 2. Financial Resources. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089, the authorizer allocates the required financial resources to support charter schools, treats charter schools no less favorably than other local schools within the system unless otherwise provided by law, and provides transparency on the availability and allocation of charter school funding.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer clearly publishes and shares the calculation of current and anticipated public funding for each charter school in accordance with law, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GaDOE/SBOE/SCSC- district allotment sheets - Local Districts- allotment sheet itemizing the calculation of state, local and federal allocations to be provided. 					
Budget allocations for the school reflect an administrative fee that aligns with the charter contract and applicable law.					
The authorizer publishes a budget reflecting the total amount received from any authorizing fees and other sources, and how those funds are allocated internally. The authorizer publishes the administrative services provided based on the administrative fees withheld.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer’s budget is sufficient and aligned to the authorizer’s goals.					

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Category II. The Petition Process

Standard 3. Petition Application. The authorizer publishes a written petition application in accordance with state requirements and timelines. The authorizer provides reasonable and timely technical assistance and is responsive to petitioner questions.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer publishes petition materials (application, timelines, process and guidance) online in an easy-to- find location.					
The authorizer clearly articulates petition requirements. Requirements are focused on written content rather than form (i.e. application length, font size, etc.).					
The authorizer publishes times and locations for petition submission that are reasonable and easy to be met by the petitioner.					
The authorizer publishes staff contact information for technical assistance.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4		
Evaluator Comments:					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
The authorizer conducts informational sessions about the petition process.		
The authorizer provides clear guidance around attendance possibilities (e.g., statewide, district, or other geographic limitations), funding structure for budget development, and requirements to align petitions to demonstrated community need.		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 4. Petition Review. The authorizer conducts petition review in accordance with state requirements. The petition review includes an evaluation team of no fewer than three individuals with diverse expertise, with at least one of the individuals having charter school experience. For the review of local charter petitions at least one of the individuals on the evaluation team shall have local district administrative experience.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The petition evaluation team includes at least three individuals that have varied and relevant skills and backgrounds (i.e. education, finance, school governance, charter experience, trained in petition review or have completed a relevant training).					
The authorizer publishes the petition evaluation criteria and the requirements for petition approval on the authorizer’s website.					
The review process includes an interview.					
Petition review and interview process are free of conflict of interest.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer trains evaluators to ensure consistent application of petition evaluation criteria. Evaluators discuss ratings and develop a list of questions to inform the interview.					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 5. Petition Decisions. The authorizer grants charters only to petitioners that have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the school, including a strong plan for improving student opportunities and outcomes. The authorizer makes petition decisions that are free from conflicts of interest.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Authorization decisions are based on evidence tied to the petition evaluation criteria, applicable accountability metrics, and legal requirements.					
In the case of denied applications, the authorizer provides the applicant with detailed feedback to provide a public record of why the applicant was denied and assist the applicant if it wants to reapply in the future.					
Recommendations are shared with petitioners at least one week prior to the authorizing board meeting and within 90 days of receiving the complete application.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3		
Evaluator Comments: 					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
Application decisions reflect rigorous consideration of the following:					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The educational program’s likelihood of success and the applicants’ capacity for educating children well, - The business and organizational plans’ viability, - The experience and capacity of the applicant team (board and proposed leaders) to implement the proposed educational, business, and organizational program, and to manage any service provider contracts. 		
<p>The authorizer board’s decisions generally align with staff recommendations. Conditional approvals are only granted for making specific technical changes and not as a means to allow the applicants to further develop proposals.</p>		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category III. Performance Contracting					
Standard 6. Pre-Opening Period. The authorizer establishes clear and necessary, but not overly burdensome expectations for the pre-opening period including, but not limited to, expectations regarding facilities, student enrollment and board development.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a pre-opening checklist or other process that clearly communicates to schools what key readiness requirements must be met to open. The checklist or process includes adequate timelines, deliverables, responsible parties, and notes which criteria may defer opening.					
Pre-opening expectations specify facility requirements that include, GaDOE Facilities Division sign off, obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy and submitting an Emergency Plan to required agencies.					
Pre-opening expectations specify student enrollment requirements including a minimum and maximum threshold to operate.					
Pre-opening expectations specify board development requirements including required trainings, policy development and operational oversight procedures.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer uses the pre-opening process to build relationships, set expectations for school performance, and provide technical assistance to schools.					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Is there a history of schools opening despite not meeting all of the pre-opening requirements? If so, why?		
Is there a history of schools not opening on time? If so, why?		
In cases where a school's opening was delayed, did the authorizer make the decision early enough so that students and parents could make other arrangements?		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 7. Performance Standards. The authorizer, through the performance contract, establishes high academic, financial, and operational performance standards under which schools will be evaluated, using objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Performance standards are included or referenced in the performance contract. These include clearly defined targets, thresholds or goals for each evaluation measure.					
Evaluation measures allow for annual review.					
Data sources used to evaluate performance are objective and verifiable.					
The authorizer measures academic performance using a framework that includes clearly defined expectations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement • Student progress measures Expectations consider ALL students, including students with special needs, students with disabilities, and English Learners.					
Financial, operational and governance standards are grounded in best practice. Standards in these areas that are in addition to legal requirements are reasonable and not overly burdensome.					
The authorizer measures financial performance standards that enable the authorizer to assess and monitor schools' financial viability. These include clearly defined metric and targets to assess near-term performance and long-term financial sustainability.					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Operational standards include measures in the following areas: educational program compliance, financial oversight, governance and transparency, protecting the rights of students and employees, and ensuring a safe school environment.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-5	6-7		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer reviews financial data and determines, based on the circumstances of each school, whether the school presents a low, medium, or high risk for financial failure. This includes assessing whether the school maintains and implements compliant policies and procedures for expending state and federal funds and maintains an appropriate and legally compliant level of transparency regarding budgeting and finance.					
The authorizer verifies that its schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to applicable open meetings and records requirements. • Maintain compliant policies and procedures for serving special student populations, including students with disabilities and those identified as gifted, experiencing homelessness, or as English Learners (EL). • Adhere to the requirements of the charter contracts and applicable education laws, rules, and regulations. 					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 8. Contract Terms and Agreements. The authorizer executes an initial contract for a term of five years that clearly outlines the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer. Agreements related to funding or in-kind services not required by OGGA §20-2-2068.1 or §20-2-2089 or that are not included in the charter contract, must be negotiated and executed in writing and signed by the local authorizer and charter school (for local charter schools) or the State Charter Schools Commission and state charter school (for state charter schools).

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Executes a contract with a legally incorporated, nonprofit governing board independent of the authorizer					
Initial contract terms are five years as stated in SBOE rule 160-4-9.-05					
The performance contract details the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, oversight, performance measures, and consequences for not meeting performance measures and material terms.					
The authorizer provides adequate and appropriate guidance to schools regarding what kinds of programmatic or operational changes constitute material changes that require authorizer approval.					
Specific services provided by the authorizer are negotiated and agreed to by both parties and are outlined in a separate written contract or service agreement, if applicable.					
Contract and/or related agreements establish equitable per-pupil funding terms or amounts as required by state law.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-4	5-6		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluator Comments:					
Standard 9. Authorizer Obligations. The authorizer follows all authorizing obligations outlined in law, State Board Rule, and the charter contract.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer’s contracts include or refer to the state and federal laws and other legal requirements the school must meet.					
A local board of education authorizer makes unused facilities (as defined by 20-2-2068.2 (h)(2)) available to local charters. The SCSC follows guidelines from the state properties commission.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation					
Standard 10. Compliance Monitoring. The authorizer protects the public interest and holds charter schools accountable for their obligations of governance, management, and oversight of public funds. The authorizer defines, communicates, and effectively implements the processes, methods, and timing of collecting and reporting school performance and compliance information. The authorizer conducts school visits as appropriate and necessary, and annually publishes school performance data.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a documented process for oversight and evaluation that aligns with the provisions of the performance contract.					
The authorizer has a documented process for conducting school site visits that includes a review of school performance and compliance in alignment with the contract, and/or subsequent agreements.					
The authorizer clearly communicates its oversight processes, including site visits, and how information gleaned from those activities is used to hold schools accountable.					
The authorizer conducts an on-site visit to each charter school at least once during the school’s charter term. Suggested rewording: The authorizer conducts an annual review, either on-site or virtually, based on school performance and compliance.					
Each year, the authorizer publishes a report on its website with individual and aggregate level school performance results based on evaluation measures included in the contracts, comparing academic, financial, and organizational performance of each school to established expectations.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4-5	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth		
The authorizer knows, at any given time, how a school is doing.				
The authorizer provides clear technical assistance to schools to ensure timely compliance with new or revised laws.				
Site visits are structured in a way that enables the authorizer to gather the information needed to evaluate the school appropriately and that respects school autonomy.				
School leaders understand their performance status.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 11. Intervention. The authorizer gives schools evidence-based, and timely notice of contract violations or performance deficiencies and allows schools reasonable time and opportunity for remediation.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has an intervention protocol which determines when it may intervene and what consequences are possible (from a conversation to probation or other more serious actions). The intervention protocol includes actions that result from annual reviews using the performance framework and interventions required outside of “normal” monitoring findings (i.e. parent phone calls). This protocol is clearly communicated to schools.					
Following each compliance site visit the authorizer provides timely written notification that includes information collected during the site visit, a summary of findings and areas needing improvement. The findings are tied directly to applicable law or contract requirements.					
The authorizer provides written notice to the school of any contract breaches or areas of noncompliance in a reasonable timeframe.					
The authorizer allows the school adequate time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance, respecting the school’s autonomy to determine how to remediate the noncompliance, when appropriate.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4		
Evaluator Comments:					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy. The authorizer upholds charter school autonomy in school level governance, including personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The contract and the authorizer’s practices recognize the school’s autonomy in school governance, instructional program implementation, personnel, and budgeting.					
If the authorizer establishes requirements beyond those specified in laws, those requirements are included in the charter contract or, if not included in the contract, schools are provided at least one year’s notice prior to the implementation of the requirement.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2		
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer differentiates its oversight to ensure that time and resources are allocated effectively based on school performance and capacity, as well as the authorizer’s goals.					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category V. Renewal and Termination					
Standard 13. Renewal and Termination Process. The authorizer clearly communicates to schools the criteria for charter termination, renewal and non-renewal that are consistent with the terms of the charter contract. The renewal process includes a written application and an opportunity for an interview.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Renewal process, criteria, and a general timeline are clearly communicated to schools well in advance of renewal and are published in a publicly accessible location. The process includes a written renewal application and an opportunity interview to make factual corrections or present supplementary evidence of performance.					
Renewal criteria are transparent, specific and align to performance standards and expectations outlined in the charter contract.					
The authorizer uses a track record of performance over multiple years to make renewal determinations.					
Revocation criteria are clearly communicated to schools.					
The authorizer provides written warning, timeline, and notice of anticipated termination prior to the end of the charter school renewal period.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4-5		
Evaluator Comments:					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
<p><u>Expansion and Replication</u> The authorizer communicates clear processes, criteria, and standards for expansion and replication, so schools know when such applications are likely to be successful.</p>					
<p>Standard 14. Renewal Decisions. The authorizer bases renewal decisions on a thorough analyses of the criteria outlined in the charter contract, with objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality. The authorizer ensures the renewal decision-making processes are free of conflicts of interest. The authorizer communicates renewal decisions to the school community and public within a timeframe that allows parents and students to exercise choices for the coming school year.</p>					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Renewal/nonrenewal recommendations are provided through prompt, written notification to the school's governing board and the public within a reasonable timeframe, following the availability of necessary data, as to provide parents and students time to exercise choices for the upcoming school year.					
Standard (5-year) renewal terms are only granted to schools that met established performance expectations outlined in the charter contract.					
Recommendations include a detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision.					
The authorizer uses policy or procedure to ensure individuals involved in the renewal decision are free from conflicts of interest.					
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluator Comments:

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p><u>Expansion and Replication</u> The authorizer evaluates the prior performance of existing schools and the organization’s capacity to grow in making expansion or replication decisions.</p>		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 15. Closure. In the event of school closure, either at the conclusion of the charter term or during the charter term, the authorizer oversees and ensures the school governing board and leadership carry out a detailed closure protocol that includes the provisions outlined in the charter contract, such as ensuring timely notification to parents; orderly transition of students and student records to new schools; and disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law, rule and contract terms.					
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	School Survey	Site Visit	Authorizer Debrief	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a written policy for termination procedures that ensures timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law and effectively implements policy in the event of a school closure.					
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating	
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1			
Evaluator Comments:					
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth		
The authorizer has a plan that establishes clear roles and responsibilities with required steps for the orderly closure of a school. The authorizer provides support for transition of students to other schools.					

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Relevant Documents Table

Relevant Documents Table

Authorizer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Established as Authorizer • Year first school opened • Authorizer Fee • Number of FTE staff • Number of Schools in Portfolio • Number of Schools Opening Next Year (if known) • Number of Students served by schools in portfolio • Percent of District/City/State (as applicable) Public Student Population • Portfolio demographic information: % economically disadvantaged, SpEd, Els • Link to list of current charter schools on authorizer's website – breakdown of number of schools managed by a CMO, EMO, virtual schools. Also include school type i.e., dropout recovery/Montessori/etc.
I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity	Relevant Documents
1. Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter authorizer organizational chart to include currently filled and vacant positions and related job descriptions • Resumes or bios of all charter authorizer staff and related contractors
2. Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorizer annual budget or documentation, with detailed line items indicating revenues and expenditures • Link to website where allotments sheets are published
II. The Petition Process	Relevant Documents
3. Petition Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the petition application for new schools • Documentation of the petition process, timeline, and directions • Link to petition liaison contact information on website • Link to application and application guidance on authorizer website
4. Petition Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bios/resumes of all individuals participating in the interview panel for the last 3 years • Written conflict of interest policy and signed affidavits by all interview panel participants • Description of petition review process to include related timelines and terms for granting interviews • Petition evaluation rubric • Interview schedule for the last 3 years including panel assigned to each interview • Link to where petition evaluation rubric can be found on authorizer's website
4. Petition Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of schools and petition decisions for the last 3 years (including one approval and one denial if available) • Copies of petition cycle recommendations from the last three application cycles • Copies of feedback provided to denied petitioners from the most recent application cycle • Petition scoring documents, comments and/or completed checklists • Copy of a recommendation email sent to petitioner

Table continued on next page

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Relevant Documents Table

III. Performance Contracting	Relevant Documents
6. Pre-Opening Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A document outlining pre-opening obligations
7. Performance Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts and/or performance frameworks with related information highlighted • Link to where contracts and performance framework results can be found on authorizer website • Documentation of data sources and calculation method for each measure used to assess school performance
8. Contract Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts with related information highlighted
9. Authorizer Obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts with related information highlighted • List of unused district facilities • Copies of related contracts or agreements between the school and authorizer
IV. Oversight & Evaluation	Relevant Documents
10. Compliance Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of oversight and evaluation process • Link to where oversight and evaluation process can be found on authorizer’s website • Documentation of process and timeline for conducting school visits • Link to where annual school performance reports can be found on authorizer’s website
11. Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of a school site visit report • Copy of a school’s corrective action plan in response to site visit report • Copy of a breach of contract or noncompliance communication to a school • List of current interventions – name of school, intervention start date, reason & status
12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written narrative or documentation of authorizer’s process for data collections, compliance requirement review, and dealing with charter school complaints. • Written any agreement between two or more parties of the charter contract that is not the charter contract
V. Renewal and Termination	Relevant Documents
13. Renewal Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of charter school contracts with relevant information highlighted • Copy of the renewal application • Written documentation of the renewal process and timeline • Link to where renewal information can be found on authorizer’s website
14. Renewal Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of renewal recommendations from the last 3 renewal cycles (including one renewal and one nonrenewal if available) • Copy of a communication sent to school with recommendation accompanying • Meeting minutes for renewal decisions and interviews • Conflict of interest (COI) policy and related signed COI forms from panelists
15. Closure/Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation outlining the authorizer’s termination procedures, closure process and timeline • Any documentation required by the authorizer's termination policy (i.e. inventory sheets, final financial statements, directory of record information, etc.) • Copy of closure communication to parents • List of closures in the past 5 years including reason for closure

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Authorizer Survey

Authorizer Survey ⁶

1. Describe your main goal(s) as an authorizing office over the next 1 – 3 years.
2. Describe your office’s progress toward the above goals, including what has helped you achieve your goals and/or have been barriers to your success.
3. How would you describe the performance of your schools?
4. As an authorizer, what are you doing well and how do you know?
5. As an authorizer, what are your greatest needs for improvement and how do you know?
6. What is the most difficult decision you have made as an authorizer? How did you feel about the outcome?
7. Do scarce financial and/or organizational resources impact your ability to do your job? If so, how?

Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our application decision-making process is strong.					
We only grant charters to applicants who demonstrate a strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter school.					
Our charter contract includes measurable goals for academic, organizational, and financial performance.					
We consistently monitor schools’ academic, organization, and financial performance.					
We utilize established intervention policies to communicate unsatisfactory performance to schools when appropriate.					
Renewal and revocation decisions are made based on evaluation of the school’s performance.					
We utilize authorizing tools in decision-making but understand that such tools assist – not dictate – decisions.					
The authorizing decision-making body supports staff recommendations regarding the approval, renewal, and revocation of charters.					
We respect the autonomy to which our schools are entitled and areas for individual school autonomy are reflected in the charter contract.					
We encourage the expansion of high-quality schools.					

⁶ The authorizer survey is included in the evaluation as an advanced practice and will not influence the overall ratings of the authorizer. Should the authorizer select this advanced practice, evaluators will use the results to inform the presentation and discussion of evaluation findings with the decision-making body.

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

School Survey

School Name:

Date:

Authorizer Name:

Number of Years authorized by Authorizer:

Current Charter Contract End Date:

Authorizer Commitment and Capacity.	
My charter authorizing office has an adequate number of staff with relevant experience to carry out its duties.	Agree Disagree
I can readily find or have access to the calculation of earned funding for my school.	Agree Disagree
I believe my authorizer responsibly uses funds earned from its administrative withhold to provide relevant and adequate services to my school.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	
Petition Process. ALL PARTIES THAT SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION IN THE MOST RECENT PETITION CYCLE WILL BE ASKED TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION.	
Petition materials were posted on my authorizer’s website in an easy to find location.	Agree Disagree
Times and locations for petition submission were clearly stated, accessible and convenient.	Agree Disagree
The authorizer publishes staff contact information for technical assistance.	Agree Disagree
Staff were available to provide technical assistance	Agree Disagree
I was provided access to petition evaluation rubrics and had a sufficient understanding of what was required to have my application approved.	Agree Disagree
My application recommendation was shared with me at least one week prior to the authorizing board’s meeting and within 90 days of receiving the application.	Agree Disagree
I believe the petition process was free from conflicts of interest.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

Performance Contracting	
<p>ONLY SCHOOLS IN THEIR PRE-OPENING OR FIRST YEAR OF OPERATIONS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK.</p> <p>Pre-opening expectations were clearly outlined to include timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties and establish criteria which may trigger a deferred opening.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>THIS QUESTION ONLY APPLIES TO SCHOOLS AUTHORIZED BY A LOCAL DISTRICT. IF YOU ARE A STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS, PLEASE LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK.</p> <p>I can readily find or have access to a list of my authorizer’s unused facilities.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
The performance targets, thresholds or goals for my school are clearly defined within the charter contract and allow for annual evaluation.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
The academic performance standards in my charter contract include both student achievement and student progress measures.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
If changes, beyond what is captured in state law, occur to the performance expectations of my school, I am adequately notified through agreement via a charter contract amendment or I am given at least one year’s notice before the change goes into effect.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
My authorizer has provided my school equitable per-pupil funding as prescribed under the law.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	
Oversight and Evaluation	
My authorizer does not interfere with my school’s autonomy in school governance, instructional program implementation, personnel, or budgeting.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
The process my authorizer uses to evaluate my school’s performance is clearly documented and aligns with the academic, financial and operational goals as outlined in my charter contract.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
My authorizer has/will conduct at least one compliance site visit during my school’s current charter term and the expectations and processes related to that site visit are clearly documented.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
Following each compliance site visit my authorizer provided a written notification that included information collected during the site visit and a summary of findings that are tied directly to applicable law or contract requirements	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
I can readily find on my authorizer’s website my school’s performance results based on evaluation measures included in the performance contracts.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
My authorizer notifies me of any contract breaches in a timely manner and I am provided a reasonable amount of time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

Renewal and Termination	
The criteria and process for charter renewal are published in a publicly accessible location and include a written application and interview opportunity.	Agree Disagree
The criteria in which my school will be evaluated on to determine renewal are clear and align with the performance expectations as outlined in the charter contract.	Agree Disagree
My authorizer assesses my school’s performance over the course of the charter term. Multiple years of data are evaluated when reviewing my school’s performance for renewal purposes.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. I believe the renewal process was free from conflicts of interest.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. My authorizer provided my school’s renewal/nonrenewal recommendation via written notification to the school's governing board within a reasonable timeframe, following the availability of necessary data.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. A detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision was included in the recommendation provided by my authorizer.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	
Please use the space below to provide any additional information you think we should know about your charter authorizer that was not covered in the above questions.	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

NOTE: The evaluation team may reach out to the school and request further information or supporting documentation related to any responses provided in the survey.