

ALABAMA NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION EVALUATION REPORT

Reviewed By:

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Alabama Public Charter School Commission

ALABAMA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
 Spring 2022 Charter Application Evaluation
 Executive Summary

Red Tails Preparatory			
Non-Profit Information			
Non-Profit:		Education Service Provider (ESP)	
		Name (# of ESP schools)	
School Information			
School:	Red Tails Preparatory	Home District:	Macon County
Grade Configuration at Start:	K-2	Districts Served:	Macon County
Grade Configuration at Scale:	K-5	Year Opening:	2023
Enrollment at Start:	249	Enrollment at Scale:	500
Proposal Summary			
<p>Academy Model: The school proposes to start a grade K-2 provider in 2023 and adding a grade each year, becoming a grade K-5 program by 2026. In partnership with the Macon County Public Schools, the school plans to provide an academically challenging, disciplined and safe education with a focus on exposing students to experiences and careers in the aviation and aerospace fields through their STEM program. The educational programs and operational plan are too dependent on external partnerships that evidently have not been solidified yet.</p> <p>Financial Model: The financial plan heavily depends on support from Macon County Schools and variable funding opportunities. However, applicant presents no evidence of support from the district and the only contingency plan is to reduce staff and apply for grants. Additionally, documentation in support of the multiple “in-kind” services listed in the financial plan is not present. Applicant stated in the interview that these services have only been discussed, not secured.</p> <p>Organizational Model: The school has a well-qualified and experienced leadership team. The board seems adequately experienced, although no one other than the executive director participated in the capacity interview or the public hearing. This raises concerns about their commitment in light of the other many unsecured assets the school will need to get launched. Finally, the organizational structure is top heavy for a single school.</p>			
Statement of Assurances Included:			No
Potential conflicts of Interest Identified:			Yes



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Section	Points Possible	Points Awarded
Educational Program	103	62
Operations Plan	69	44
Financial Plan	20	5
Overall Alignment & Viability	15	5
TOTAL	207	116
Link to Rubric	http://www.alchartercommission.com/media/qqzlnbkg/apsc-application-rubric-6-2020.pdf	

Strengths of the Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good curriculum and instruction plan, adequate standards for student performance and advancement, and culturally responsive school climate and discipline plan. • Use of restorative justice practices for student discipline is culturally responsive and innovative.
Areas Needing Further Attention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and community involvement in the development of the application is vaguely described and only one event is specifically described. Other than that, only the dates of additional “encounters” with parents and community members are listed. No information is provided regarding specific ways the application request parent or community input. • Proposed school relies heavily on outside programs which are not tied closely with school practices. A greater description of in school practices over packaged programs would be have been stronger. • Critical elements of the operation plan, including facilities, summer school, transportation, provision of free and reduced lunch plan are dependent on successfully contracting with the county school district; however, no evidence of support from or partnership with the district is evident. • Little rationale is given to justify the need for both an executive director and a principal. Organizational structure is very top heavy for a single school proposal.



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SECTION 1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Category	Score	Evaluative Comments
Educational Program Overview	2 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment of the problem presented by ACEs and incorporation of restorative justice practices are innovative and on point for this population; however, having brought up ACEs no specific trauma informed practices are discussed. • Goals as stated are vague. • Support for the charter school by the district is not evident.
Curriculum & Instructional Design	15 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C&I plan acknowledges the need to address the whole child. • C&I plan addresses nonacademic challenges that may affect the students' achievement. • Inclusion of a formal mentorship program is a strength although details regarding the mentorship program are not provided.
Student Performance Standards	3 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate student performance standards and proposed policies and expectations for promotion of students.
HS Graduation Requirements (HS Only)	N/A	
School Calendar and Schedule	3 (Very Good)	
School Culture	5 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant proposes a multi-component approach to promoting school culture; however, specific details were insufficiently described. • Reliance on a retreat prior to the start of the school year to which children and families are invited is presented as critical point for creating positive school culture; however, no discussion is presented regarding how the school will get the parents and children to participate. Failure to get high levels of participation in the retreat could be the whole school culture model in jeopardy.
Supplemental Programming	2 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only two opportunities for Supplemental Programming are provided (both STEM related). • No details regarding summer programming are provided; applicant only says that if approved, provision of summer program is dependent on partnership with Macon County Schools.
Special Populations and At-Risk Students	10 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to serve special needs students is adequate.
Student Recruitment & Enrollment	2 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment plan is vague and does not specifically address culturally inclusive marketing strategies.



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Student Discipline Policy & Plan	3 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough discussion of strategies for and processes of student discipline. • Details of the restorative justice approach should have been included in this section.
Family & Community Involvement	2 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and community involvement in the development of the application is vaguely described and only one event is specifically described. Other than that, only the dates of additional “encounters” with parents and community members are listed. No information is provided regarding specific ways the application request parent or community input. • Opportunities for parental involvement during the school year seem adequate.
Educational Program Capacity	15 (Very Good)	

SECTION 2. OPERATIONS PLAN

Category	Score	Evaluative Comments
Organization Structure & Partnerships	5 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership team is experienced; however, organizational structure is top heavy for a single school. • Needs more details regarding community partnerships. • Support of/partnership with county school district is not evident.
Governing Board	10 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well qualified and experienced board.
Staffing Plans	3 (Very Good)	
Professional Development	5 (Very Good)	
Performance Management	5 (Very Good)	
Facilities	8 (Very Good)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility has not been secured.
Startup & Ongoing Operations	5 (Fair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer school plan, transportation plan and national school lunch program description are insufficient and dependent on collaboration by Macon County Schools. • Applicant provides no details regarding variable funding sources and many budget items are listed as being provided “in-kind” without supporting legal documentation ensuring that said services will be delivered.



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Operations Capacity	3 (Very Good)	
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SECTION 3. FINANCIAL PLAN

Category	Score	Evaluative Comments
Financial Plan & Financial Management Capacity	5 (Weak)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much of the financial plan relies on contingencies and undescribed variable funding opportunities. • Again, too much of the plan depends on support from Macon County Schools, although this support is not apparent.

SECTION 4. OVERALL ALIGNMENT AND VIABILITY

Category	Score	Evaluative Comments
Overall Alignment & Viability	5 (Weak)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to start up and sustain a school is not apparent and too dependent on support from the district which is not evident. • Insufficient justification for top heavy organizational structure.
Experienced Operators if Applicable		N/A

Conflict of Interest	Yes/No
The description of the board’s ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest does not exist or is lacking sufficient detail (Attachment 16): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Code of Ethics Policy. ▪ Conflict of Interest Policy. 	Yes
The applicant has provided a signed, conflict of interest statement for every: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicant team member ▪ Identified board member 	No
The applicant has provided a statement of Assurances agreeing to requirements should approval be granted.	Yes