

ALABAMA NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION EVALUATION REPORT



ALABAMA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
Summer 2020 Charter Application Evaluation
Executive Summary

Knowledge Unlimited Public Charter School – Final Recommendation to the Commission

Non-Profit Information			
Non-Profit:	<i>Knowledge Unlimited Foundation</i>	Education Service Provider (ESP)	<i>No</i>
		Name (# of ESP schools)	<i>N/A</i>
School Information			
School:	<i>Knowledge Unlimited Public Charter School</i>	Home District:	<i>Bessemer, City</i>
Grade Configuration at Start:	<i>K-2</i>	Districts Served:	<i>Bessemer City Schools</i>
Grade Configuration at Scale:	<i>K-5</i>	Year Opening:	<i>2020-2021</i>
Enrollment at Start:	<i>249</i>	Enrollment at Scale:	<i>498</i>
Proposal Summary			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Model: The applicant proposes opening a K-5 elementary school located in the Bessemer City School District in Jefferson County Alabama for underserved students. The applicant states its school’s mission is to provide a holistic educational experience that prepares all students for college and career through challenging and hands-on learning experiences, with a focus on all students’ social and emotional development. The school plans to open in the SY2021-2022 and welcome students in kindergarten through second grade and will expand to fifth grade by SY2025-2026. The applicant group cites SY2018-2019 academic data indicating the achievement scores of seven local schools (elementary, middle, and high) in Bessemer City Schools that are currently underperforming in reading, math, and science and have report card letter grades ranging from C to D. The applicant states it will utilize the following curricula for reading, phonics, math, science, and social studies: Ready Gen; Phonics First; Ready Mathematics; Interactive Science; and IMPACT social studies. The applicant also makes evident its plans to use Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) to provide cross-curricular aerospace-themed lessons, as well as an internal curriculum for oral language and social-emotional development. • Financial Model: The proposed school will develop financial plans and budgets with the Head of School, Finance Officer, and Board of Directors with assistance from Mission 1st Advisors in the areas of budgeting, management, and systems development. The applicant has noted that the financial oversight is the responsibility of the Board and the day-to-day financial management is the responsibility of the Head of School while noting appropriate tasks for both areas of responsibility. The startup budget and eight-year budget included show the plan to create long-term sustainability while increasing enrollment and funding the educational goals of the organization. • Organizational Model: The proposed school will be governed by a Board of Directors. The Founding Board currently has six members and will expand to nine members by year five of the school’s existence. The Board members possess a wide range of expertise including K-12 and higher education, engineering, and business, but lacks a person with financial expertise. The applicant has also identified a Head of School (HOS) who currently serves as a lead teacher in the Bessemer City Public School system and has held additional teaching positions since 2013. The Board plans to provide financial and academic oversight and the applicant includes performance evaluations for the school’s leader. The school will also employ a Director of Operations (DOO), Director of Curriculum (DOC), and Director of Student Supports (DSS); all three will report to the HOS. 			



Statement of Assurances Included:	Yes
Potential Conflicts of Interest Identified:	No

Non-High Schools – New Operator

Section	Points Possible	Score
Educational Program	103	55
Operations Plan	69	38
Financial Plan & Financial Management Capacity	20	3
Overall Alignment	15	1
Experienced Operators (If Applicable)	N/A	N/A
Total	197	97

Strengths of the Application:

- Knowledge Unlimited Public Charter School (Knowledge U) plans to offer a hands-on instructional approach to educate the whole child in the Bessemer area of Alabama for students in grades K-5.
- Knowledge U has identified seven of the nine Board members. The Board includes parents and members of the community with a wide range of education and business expertise.
- A review of the application indicates Knowledge U has provided a clear staffing for years one through five; the staffing includes administrative, instructional, operations, and support staff to adequately support the school’s projected enrollment.

Areas Needing Further Attention:

- While Knowledge U stated three goals, these goals do not have clear metrics and the application does not indicate how the goals will be measured.
- A review of the application indicates the school has a clear vision, and the applicant has outlined details of the proposed educational program and a clear discipline plan; however, both the educational program and discipline plan lack evidence of how the school and its academic program are culturally responsive. Further, the applicant provides marketing details for recruitment and enrollment and a rationale for how it will engage with prospective families but does not provided detailed information on how the applicant plans to recruit a culturally diverse and inclusive student population.
- The eight-year budget and the accompanying narrative do not include complete revenue assumptions for CSP and USDA child nutrition programming and also lacks explanation as to how the stated development plan of \$500,000 annually will be implemented. Furthermore, the expenses must provide more evidence of development especially in the areas of financial management, facility procurement, and in-kind services. The eight-year budget model has a calculation error that masks the actual cash deficit of \$49,327 in the FY22 school year.

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SECTION 1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM - 107 points

Educational Program Overview			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no information regarding the essential design elements of the school model, and/or the applicant has not provided at least three measurable goals. Little to no research base and little to no mention of the instructional methods and assessment strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essential design elements of the school model and the goals (at least three) lack clarity and/or are not all measurable. The applicant has demonstrated a limited understanding of the research-based and/or other evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population. The applicant minimally mentions the instructional methods and/or does not describe in sufficient detail the impact of the culturally responsive(1) instructional aspects of the program on the proposed student population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided the essential design elements of the school model, and at least three (no more than five) specific and measurable goals. Evidence that the educational program or essential design elements of the program are based on proven methods and provided evidence that the proposed educational program has a sound base in research, theory, and/or experience, and has been or is likely to be rigorous, engaging, and effective for the anticipated student population. The applicant has described the culturally responsive(1) instructional aspects of the educational program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has convincingly and comprehensively summarized the essential design elements of the school model and provided at least three (no more than five) specific and measurable goals. Strong and convincing evidence of research base. The applicant has clearly and comprehensively described the culturally responsive(1) instructional aspects of the program and provided strong evidence of impact within the anticipated student population.
Weak – 1	Educational Program Overview		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant identifies college and career ready, holistic, rigorous, and hands-on approach as foci (p. 6) and described the key design elements of the school (i.e., balanced instructional practice, multisensory learning task, and implementation of rigorous standards-based curricula as well as the implementation of a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through an interdisciplinary and applied approach (p. 11). The applicant states the goal for Knowledge Unlimited Public (Knowledge U) is to eradicate the achievement gap in underserved populations and includes three measurable goals: supersede the achievement performance of the local elementary schools by five percentage points in both reading and math, and demonstrate a year and half of growth in reading and math, beginning in 2022 (p. 8); however, these goals do not include specific measures. During the interview, the applicant stated that all students are expected to score at least 70% proficiency or higher as measured by the Alabama State assessment; but did not provide any additional clarity or measured goals. While the applicant provided design elements, instructional strategies, and goals, the applicant did not identify a research base or other evidence that promises success for this instructional program with the anticipated student population. During the interview process, the applicant stated that the school is based on a backwards design approach beginning with the end in mind. 		
Curriculum & Instructional Design			
Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 15	Excellent 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no description of the basic learning environment, little or no description of the curricula aligned to state standards. Applicant provides little to no description of curricular choices and rationale behind those choices– or – the applicant has chosen one or more core curricula that receive a “Does Not Meet” rating on EdReports.org on any indicator within those reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the basic learning environment is limited and/or only includes some of the required information or is not aligned to the school mission and vision. The applicant has identified curricular choices that do not receive any “Does Not Meet” ratings on EdReports.org, but receive mostly “Almost Meets Expectations” ratings and provides a minimal or unsupported rationale for why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the basic learning environment is clear, includes class size and structure, is aligned to the school’s mission and vision, and describes evidence that the learning environment is culturally responsive(1). The applicant has identified curricular choices that do not receive any “Does Not Meet” ratings on EdReports.org, but receive mostly “Almost Meets Expectations” ratings and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the basic learning environment is clear, comprehensive and includes class size and structure, is well aligned to the school’s mission and vision, and demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of culturally responsive(1). The applicant has identified curricular choices that receive mostly “Meets Expectations” ratings on EdReports.org and provides a strong rationale for why the curricula were chosen.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the applicant plans to develop a curriculum, little or no description of how. Little to no description of instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the curricula were chosen and how they support the vision. For internally developed curricula, there is a limited or incomplete description regarding how the curriculum will be developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a strong rationale for why the curricula were chosen and how they support the vision. A sample scope and sequence for one subject in one grade of each division (elementary, middle, and high) is provided. Applicant describes the curriculum and summarizes the curricular choices and the rationale for each. For internally developed curricula, the applicant provides a detailed description regarding how the curriculum will be developed, including who will be responsible and when key stages will be completed. The applicant has provided a description of the primary instructional strategies, along with a rationale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant comprehensively describes the curriculum and its alignment to the goals, summarizes the curricular choices and the rationale for each -or- provides a detailed, comprehensive, and well-articulated description regarding how the curriculum will be developed. There is a detailed, sophisticated, and comprehensive description of the primary instructional strategies along with compelling research, or experience- based rationale
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Very Good- 14	Curriculum & Instructional Design
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<p><i>Evaluative Comments:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the application the applicant describes a balanced approach to learning to include direct instruction, guided practice, independent practice, multisensory learning tasks and includes time intervals for each balanced portion (p. 15-17). The applicant also states each classroom will use a two-teacher model (p. 16) and references the use of culturally relevant text (p. 13 and 18). The applicant presents the school’s core curricula (i.e., Ready Gen- English Language Arts (ELA), Phonics First-Orton-Gillingham, and Ready Mathematics- Curriculum Associates) were selected based on quality and are aligned to the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards (p. 13-15). While the applicant stated in the interview that all curricular choices score in the “meets” category or higher, EdReports shows the rating for Ready Math is sufficient, but Orton Gillingham Phonics First is not rated. In the application (p 13-15) the applicant has provided a rationale for each curricular choice. For example, the applicant has selected Ready Gen as the reading curriculum for students and further explains that the curriculum will allow students to engage with culturally relevant texts from a variety of genres. Additionally, the applicant selected Ready Mathematics and explains this curricular choice will allow students to practice with basic skills, computation, and conceptual understanding. In the application (p. 12) the applicant also states that the selected curricula will aide students in demonstrating proficiency on the Alabama College and Career standards. The applicant provided a sample scope and sequence for Ready Gen Math, grade three (Ready Gen scope and sequence). The applicant has identified the use of an internally developed curriculum for Oral Language (p. 15) that will be developed by the Head of School. In the description of the course, the applicant also includes a rationale for developing the curriculum and offering the course but does not provide key stages of when the development will be completed. During the interview, the applicant stated that the course is fully developed and gave a brief outline of the course In the application (pg.15-16), the applicant states each teacher will tailor instruction to meet the individual needs of the students. The applicant further states that lessons will be designed with a balanced instruction approach and will include the following strategies: direct instruction; guided practice; independent practice; and multi-sensory learning activities. While the applicant provides some description of the instructional strategies, the application does not include a research base for the effectiveness with the targeted population.
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Student Performance Standards			
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Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the student performance standards for the school as a whole. The applicant has insufficiently or not addressed policies, standards, and/or expectations for promoting students. The applicant has provided little to no description of the school’s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the student performance standards for the school as a whole, though, the description does not address all grades and is limited in detail. The applicant has mentioned the policies, standards, and expectations for promoting students from one grade to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the student performance standards for the school as a whole and they are aligned with state standards. The proposed policies, standards, and expectations for promoting students from one grade to the next are based on research and/or best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a comprehensive description of the student performance standards for the school as a whole. The proposed policies, standards, and expectations for promoting students from one grade to the next are based on research and/or best practices, demonstrate high standards for

exit standards for graduating students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> next and that they are based on research and/or best practices. The applicant has provided the school's exit standards for graduating students, though it is not clear what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do to meet or exceed all state grade level expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practices and there is a culturally responsive(1) plan for clearly communicating these criteria to staff, students, and families. The applicant has provided the school's exit standards for graduating students which clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students and are well aligned to the school's education program, mission, and vision. The applicant has provided a strong, culturally responsive(1) plan for clearly communicating these criteria. The applicant has provided the school's exit standards for graduating students which clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.
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Very Good – 4	Student Performance Standards
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant describes the school's student performance standards and notes the school's performance standards are based on the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards (p. 18). The applicant articulates the Head of School shall develop promotion standards based on the guidelines of the Alabama Literacy Act and to present to the Board of Directors for approval. The applicant further evidences the promotion policy for grades K-2, 3, and 4-5 (p. 19-20) along with "Good Cause Exemptions" (p. 20) but does not provide a culturally responsive plan for communicating these criteria to staff, students, and families. The applicant indicates all Knowledge U students will receive the knowledge, concepts, and skills to be prepared for College and Career and provided specific promotion standards for grade four (p. 20). Additionally, when describing the exit standards, the applicant makes evident all students in fifth grade must demonstrate grade level proficiency of the grade level standards, make adequate academic growth for the year in reading and mathematics, and make a passing grade in reading, math and one other core subject (e.g., science or social studies), as well as demonstrate proficiency in writing as documented by work samples in the students' writing portfolios (p. 20).

HS Graduation Requirements (HS Only)

Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of how the school will meet the requirements described and/or little or no explanation of how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed state standards, there is not an explanation of the additional requirements. There is little or no explanation of how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities. There is little or no explanation of the systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a limited description with insufficient detail on how the school will meet the requirements described, along with an explanation of how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered; and if graduation requirements for the school will exceed state standards, an explanation of the additional requirements was minimally described. The explanation of how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities lacks clarity and sufficient detail. There is a limited or insufficient explanation of the systems and structures the school will implement for serving students at risk of dropping out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of how the school will meet the requirements described, along with an explanation of how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed state standards, there is an explanation of the additional requirements. There is an explanation of how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities. There is a clear description of the systems and structures the school will implement for serving students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear and comprehensive description of how the school will meet the requirements described, along with a strong explanation of how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed state standards, there is an explanation of the additional requirements. There is a clear and convincing description of how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities. There is a thorough and sophisticated description of the systems and structures used for students at risk of dropping out.

N/A	HS Graduation Requirements (HS Only)
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Applicable: This topic does not apply to this applicant.

School Calendar and Schedule			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the annual academic schedule for the school, how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program and meets the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation ...does not include the total number of instructional days and hours, holidays, make-up days in case of inclement weather, and state assessment days. The applicant has provided little or no evidence regarding the structure of the school day and week, including the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects, <i>and/or</i> there is little or no explanation on how the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the annual academic schedule for the school, though it does not clearly explain <i>and/or</i> demonstrate how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program and meets Alabama's Standards. The school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation lacks sufficient detail regarding the total number of instructional days and hours, holidays, make-up days in case of inclement weather, and state assessment days. The applicant has provided limited and insufficient detail regarding the structure of the school day and week, including the number of instructional hours/ minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, the start and dismissal times. There is a minimal explanation why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear description of the annual academic schedule for the school which explains <i>and</i> demonstrates how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program and meets Alabama's Standards. The school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation includes the total number of instructional days and hours, holidays, make-up days in case of inclement weather, and state assessment days. The applicant describes the structure of the school day and week, including the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, and the start and dismissal times. There is an explanation why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. The minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade has been provided along with a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear and compelling description of the annual academic schedule for the school which explains <i>and</i> demonstrates how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program and meets or exceeds Alabama's Standards. The school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation includes the total number of instructional days and hours, holidays, make-up days in case of inclement weather, and state assessment days. The applicant has comprehensively described the structure of the school day and week, including the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, and the start and dismissal times. There is a strong and sophisticated explanation as to why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning and faculty/staff development needs.
Excellent- 4	School Calendar and Schedule		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge U plans to provide an extended school year with 187 instructional days, including seven more days than the traditional public schools (p. 21-22). The applicant group articulates its reasoning for the extended calendar is to provide students access to a challenging, rigorous curriculum for the target population (p. 21). A review of the calendar attachment (school calendar) provided by the applicant group demonstrates the instructional calendar will include 187 days, for 8.10 hours each day, for a total of 1,515 hours per school year (SY) (p. 22). The calendar makes evident the school has incorporated holiday breaks and state assessment days but did not clearly articulate make-up days in case of inclement weather. During the interview, the applicant stated that it is aware it will need to incorporate inclement weather days into the school's schedule and provided additional information on how these days will be incorporated The applicant group documents the schools' instructional day will begin at 7:50 am and end at 4:00 pm, four days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) and will end at 2:00 pm on Wednesday. The applicant group also makes evident the instructional time for each core content area (180 minutes- literacy, 60 minutes- math, 50 minutes- Science/Social Studies) (p. 22). In the application, the applicant also articulates all students will have an early dismissal on Wednesday to provide Knowledge U teachers and staff with professional development. Further, the applicant group states the school's schedule is designed to maximize core content time and minimize transitions. The applicant articulates the target student population may include students who are below grade level, have limited English proficiency or special needs, and further states the extended calendar year and extended daily schedule will provide additional time (7 calendar days and 100 minutes per day) for student learning (p. 22). During the interview, the applicant group further stated that all students will attend for a half day on Wednesday, allowing for teachers to participate in professional development (PD) for half day. Although the applicant did not provide a weekly schedule, the group did provide a sample daily schedule detailing the amount of time devoted to academic instruction and student development including morning meeting- 15 minutes, school-wide intervention- 30 minutes, phonics instruction-45 minutes, reading comprehension-35 minutes, reading technology- 45 minutes, read aloud- 25 minutes, math- 60 minutes, 		

	<p>writing and oral language-30 minutes, social studies- 50 minutes, physical education-50 minutes, choice time-35 minutes, and closing circle and dismissal-15 minutes. During the interview, the applicant provided a weekly schedule for students including a total of 810 minutes per day that includes 180 minutes for reading each day. The applicant also noted that each Wednesday will be an early release day for all students.</p>
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School Culture

Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 15	Excellent 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the culture of the proposed school or an explanation of how it will promote a positive and culturally inclusive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. There is little or no description for how the school will establish and maintain the school culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians starting from the first day of school, and/or there is little or no description of a plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the culture of the proposed school lacks sufficient detail as to how it will promote a positive and culturally inclusive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. There is a limited explanation of how the school will establish and maintain the school culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians starting from the first day of school, including a plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year; demonstrates a limited or incomplete understanding of how to create and implement a positive school culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the culture of the proposed school, explaining how it will promote a positive and culturally inclusive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. There is a description for how the school will establish and maintain the school culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians starting from the first day of school, including a plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a compelling description of the culture of the proposed school, explaining how it will build, promote, and sustain a positive and culturally inclusive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. The applicant’s description demonstrates a solid understanding and strong capacity to practice cultural inclusiveness. There is a well-articulated, comprehensive and compelling description for how the school will establish and maintain the school culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians starting from the first day of school, including a plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.

Excellent-18	School Culture
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<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to a review of the application (p. 23), Knowledge U will promote a holistic educational experience in order to develop students’ academic, social, and emotional skills. The applicant further states that all students should receive the best educational care regardless of their socioeconomic status. The applicant also articulates the school will create a trauma- sensitive environment and will serve as a support system to students and their families and will ensure that students receive the resources, accommodations, and modifications needed in order to be successful, while maintaining high behavioral and academic expectations. However, the applicant does not provide detail on how it plans to promote a positive and culturally inclusive environment. During the interview, the applicant stated the school’s staff plans to begin promoting the culture of the school over the summer and will host one community event during the summer. The applicant further described this as a time to go into the community and demonstrate care and importance to all of the students. Additionally, the applicant stated the school’s staff will teach habits of success (i.e., looking a person in the eye, shaking hands, active listening) and establish expectations with students and families but did not specifically state how the plan is culturally inclusive. While the applicant explains that the school’s leaders, teachers, and staff will model expectations for conduct and will ensure students and families know the non-negotiables (p. 23), it does not clearly articulate how the applicant will communicate these expectations and non-negotiable to current students or students who enter mid-year. During the interview, the applicant stated it will host an event over the summer and the expectations for student behavior and culture will be communicated to parents and students. In the application (p. 23), the applicant states it plans to begin each Knowledge U day with a morning huddle and further describes how it will utilize this time to build strong relationships between staff and students but does not provide a complete understanding of how it will create and implement a positive school culture.
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Supplemental Programming			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of culturally responsive(1) extra-curricular or co-curricular activities offerings and how they will be delivered and funded. and/or there is no description of how the school will pay for student participation in district sponsored interscholastic programs. There is little or no description of culturally responsive(1) programs that address the mental, emotional, and social development and health of ALL students, including how the program will be funded and how those programs will meet the unique needs of the student population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of culturally responsive(1) extra-curricular or co-curricular activities offerings and how they will be delivered and funded is limited in scope and/or does not provide sufficient detail to determine sufficient resources and/or program viability. and/or the applicant minimally addressed how the school will pay for student participation in district sponsored interscholastic programs. The description of culturally responsive(1) programs that address the mental, emotional, and social development and health of ALL students, including how the program will be funded and how those programs will meet the unique needs of the student population is limited in scope and/or does not provide sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear description of culturally responsive(1) extra-curricular or co-curricular activities offerings and how they will be delivered and funded, including the schedule, length, and anticipated participants. There is a description of how the school will pay for student participation in district sponsored interscholastic programs. There is a clear description of culturally responsive(1) programs that address the mental, emotional, and social development and health of ALL students, including how the program will be funded and how those programs will meet the unique needs of the student population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clearly and convincingly articulated and comprehensive description of culturally responsive(1) extra-curricular or co-curricular activities offerings and how they will be delivered and funded, including the schedule, length, and anticipated participants, and how the school will pay for student participation in district sponsored interscholastic programs. There is a clearly articulated and compelling description of culturally responsive(1) programs that address the mental, emotional, and social development and health of ALL students, including how the program will be funded and how those programs will meet the unique needs of the student population.
Weak – 1	Supplemental Programming		
<i>Evaluative Comments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant identifies the school will offer Arts, Aviation, and Aerospace, along with social and emotional health and education to all students in year one and cub scouts by year three (p. 27-28). Further, the application notes the school does not plan to offer summer school at this time but will include summer school in the future to provide continued social-emotional and academic growth. While the applicant identifies some supplemental programming (i.e., arts, aviation, and aerospace, and cub scouts), the applicant does not clearly articulate how the programming is culturally responsive and provides students the ability to learn from and relate with people of their own culture and other cultures. During the interview, when asked about how the school's supplemental programming is culturally responsive, the applicant stated that the school's programming is designed to prepare students for college and the work force, as well as provide students with skills in math, science, aviation, and technology but did not state how the plan is culturally responsive. A review of the application outlines the school's supplemental programming (p. 27-28) and indicates the school will receive a fully funded grant from the Greater Birmingham Arts Education Collaborative as evidenced by a letter provided from the Greater Birmingham Arts Education Collaborative (letter attached). Additionally, a review of the application (p. 28) demonstrates the school will form a partnership with the Bessemer Civil Air Patrol (CAP) to provide students the opportunity to engage in the field of aviation and aerospace as a supplement to the school's Aerospace Connections in Education (ACE) curriculum. While a review of the school's budget includes funds for the curriculum and a letter from CAP demonstrates an intent to form a partnership, the applicant group does not provide evidence of how the supplemental Aviation and Aerospace program and partnership will be funded. The applicant makes evident the school will teach children social development skills (e.g., forming positive relationships) (p. 28) and will partner with the Aspire movement, a life on life mentoring program for students in grades four and five. The applicant further states mentors will visit the school once a week to meet with students individually as well as in in whole group or small groups. However, the applicant neither provides a partnership letter from the organization to include details of how the program will be funded, nor does the applicant indicate how this or other programs are culturally responsive. 		
Special Populations and At-Risk Students			
Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 10	Excellent 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided little to no description of an overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with IEPs or Section 504 plans, ELLs, students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with IEPs or Section 504 plans, ELLs, students identified as intellectually gifted, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with IEPs or Section 504 plans, ELLs, students identified as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear and comprehensive description of an overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with IEPs or Section 504 plans, ELLs,

<p>identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out is limited and lacks sufficient detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan minimally or does not address how the school will meet students' needs in the least restrictive environment. 	<p>and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out, is limited and lacks sufficient detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan minimally addresses how the school will meet students' needs in the least restrictive environment. 	<p>intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan addresses how the school will meet students' needs in the least restrictive environment. 	<p>students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan thoroughly addresses how the school will meet students' needs in the least restrictive environment and the school calendar and schedule is supportive of the needs.
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Fair – 5	Special Populations and At-Risk Students
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<p><i>Evaluative Comments:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the application (p. 29-34) articulates a description of the plan to serve students with disabilities, students on 504 plans, English Language Learners (ELLs), students who are Intellectually Gifted (IG), and struggling and at-risk students. The plan articulates a process for identification including Tiered interventions, data collection and assessments (e.g., Academic, phonics, reading comprehension and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment [WIDA] Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State [ACCESS] for ELL's), continuous monitoring, as well as collaborative meetings with parents, teachers, and support staff members (i.e., the Problem-Solving Team (PST). However, the applicant provides limited details for providing appropriate services to meet the needs of students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 plans as well as ELLs. During the interview, the applicant group stated that the school plans to use Child Find to identify the students in need of an IEP but does not expect to have a high number of special education students in grades K-2, The applicant did not provide additional details of how the school plans to serve students with disabilities. The applicant group states it believes all students deserve the opportunity to experience success in the context of their peers and makes evident that all students will be served in the least restrictive environment (p. 29). The applicant further addresses the need to properly identify students and articulates the school will implement a three-tier Response to Intervention (RtI) program. In accordance with the state requirements, the applicant makes evident its plans to properly evaluate all students ages three to five and school-aged children with suspected learning disabilities through Alabama's Early Intervention System, Child Find (p. 30). The applicant further states that all students will be serviced in the general education classroom and teachers will provide support for students based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan but does not detail how the general education teacher will administer the proper accommodations and modifications. While the school's staffing list indicates the school will employ a Director of Student Support (DSS), the school's staffing plan demonstrates the school will not employ a Special Education teacher until SY2023-2024. During the interview, the applicant referenced the teacher allocation in the budget and stated that the school's service model will be based the students' IEPs. Accommodations, modifications, and individualized instruction will be provided by the school's Director of Student Support in years one and two and by the special education teacher in year three.
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Student Recruitment & Enrollment			
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Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the culturally inclusive student marketing and recruitment plan and how it will provide equal access to all interested students and families and/or the applicant has minimally or not described the school's plan for outreach to at-risk students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a limited and incomplete description of the culturally inclusive student marketing and recruitment plan and how it will provide equal access to all interested students and families, and/or the applicant has minimally described the school's plan for outreach to at-risk students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the culturally inclusive student marketing and recruitment plan and how it will provide equal access to all interested students and families. The applicant has specifically described the school's plan for outreach to at-risk students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a comprehensive and compelling description of the culturally inclusive student marketing and recruitment plan and how it will provide equal access to all interested students and families. The applicant has specifically and completely described the school's plan for outreach to at-risk students, including evidence of targeted outreach plans to specific neighborhoods or zip codes, identified based on the proposed student population and the mission of the school.

Weak – 1	Student Recruitment & Enrollment
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<p><i>Evaluative Comments:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant states it is committed to building a culturally inclusive student population at all age/grade levels (p. 35). A review of the application further demonstrates the applicant plans to use a wide variety of communications (i.e., public tv releases, door to door solicitation, social media, flyers and newspaper and radio ads) to provide equal access to all interested families. The applicant states it will not limit admission based on ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, income, disability, English language proficiency, or academic or athletic ability (Enrollment Policy). Although the applicant stated recruitment and marketing
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	<p>plans are intentional and varied to reach a variety of families, it does not provide a clear description of the marketing and recruitment plan to recruit a culturally inclusive student population. During the interview, the applicant stated that the school plans to market in a way that everyone has access to knowledge of the school. The applicant further described the use of social media, fliers, videos, and the Chamber of Commerce’s social media as platforms to market to families but did not provide further details on how the marketing program is culturally responsive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant group makes evident the achievement gap has attributed to African American students in underserved areas being academically unsuccessful (reading achievement 15.3 % and math 12.7%) (p. 35) and provides socioeconomic data from the Alabama State Department of Education to demonstrate the performance gap between impoverished school districts (Bessemer, 69.2% economically disadvantaged) and non-impoverished school districts (Hoover); however, the applicant does not describe a plan to reach out and specifically target enrollment for at-risk students.
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Student Discipline Policy & Plan

Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided little or no description of the proposed discipline plan, with little or no detail on how the plan is based on some combination of research, theory, experience, and best practices, and/or little or no explanation on how the discipline policy will be culturally responsive(1) and effective for the anticipated student population, and/or little or no demonstration of compliance with applicable state laws and authorizer policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a limited and insufficient description of the proposed discipline plan, with insufficient detail on how the plan is based on some combination of research, theory, experience, and best practices, and/or little or no demonstration or explanation on how the discipline policy will be culturally responsive(1) and effective for the anticipated student population, or in compliance with applicable state laws and authorizer policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a detailed description of the proposed discipline plan, along with a detailed explanation of how the plan is based on some combination of research, theory, experience, and best practices, and a clear demonstration and explanation on how the discipline policy will be culturally responsive(1) and effective for the anticipated student population and has demonstrated compliance with applicable state laws and authorizer policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a convincing, comprehensive, and thorough description of the proposed discipline plan, with detail on how the plan is based on some combination of research, theory, experience, and best practices, and a clear and sophisticated demonstration and explanation on how the expectations and discipline policy will be culturally responsive(1) and effective for the anticipated student population, and has comprehensively demonstrated compliance with applicable state laws, authorizer policies, and due process requirements. The applicant demonstrates the capacity to successfully implement the discipline plan schoolwide.

Fair – 2	Student Discipline Policy & Plan
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<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the application (p. 37-39) provides a detailed description of Knowledge U’s Student Discipline Policy and plan including a list of offenses, potential consequences, and criteria for suspension and expulsion. The student discipline plan details three categories of progressive behavior offenses (levels 1, 2, and 3) and describes example behaviors for each level of offense (behavior flowchart). The applicant group also articulates the plan to encourage positive behavior within the student population based on the school’s three core values, iTREE (Integrity, Teamwork, Respect, Excellence, and Empowerment) and plans to recognize and honor students’ attendance, citizenship, academic achievement, and improvement (p. 38). However, the plan does not cite specific research indicating this disciplinary approach is effective with the targeted population. During the interview, the applicant stated that the school’s discipline policy is a traditional model and the plan will be focused on a trauma-sensitive environment. The applicant further stated that the staff will participate in book studies throughout the year to learn about identifying students who are experiencing trauma but did not provide research on how this approach is successful with the targeted population. A review of the applicant’s Discipline Flow Chart and Student Discipline Policy and Plan demonstrates the applicant has indicated it will implement a Due Process for all behavior offenses including compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act for expelling or suspending students with disabilities but fails to provide sufficient details as to how the applicant’s policy and plan are culturally responsive and effective for the anticipated student population and how the school’s discipline plan is in compliance with Alabama State Laws.
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Family & Community Involvement			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided little or no description and/or evidence of the specific role to date of the parents/guardians and community members involved in developing the proposed school and/or any other evidence of parent/guardian and community support for the proposed charter school. The applicant has provided little or no evidence that the school has assessed and built parent/guardian and community demand for the proposed school <i>and/or</i> little to no description how the school will engage families and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has described and provided evidence on the role to date of the parents/guardians and community members involved in developing the proposed school <i>and</i> has mentioned other evidence of parent/guardian and community support for the proposed school, though the information is limited and lacking in sufficient detail to determine engagement. The applicant has demonstrated some assessment of parent/guardian and community demand for the proposed school, though its description of how the school will engage families and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening has limited outreach strategies, and the nature of family and community engagement is unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has described and provided evidence on the specific role to date of the parents/guardians and community members involved in developing the proposed school <i>and</i> has included any other evidence of parent/guardian and community support for the proposed charter school. The applicant demonstrates that the school has assessed and built parent/guardian and community demand for the proposed school and describes how the school will engage families and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has articulately described, in detail, and provided evidence on the specific role to date of the parents/guardians and community members involved in developing the proposed school <i>and</i> has included any other evidence of parent/guardian and community support for the proposed charter school. The applicant convincingly demonstrates that the school has assessed and built strong parent/guardian and community demand for the proposed school and comprehensively describes how the school will engage families and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening with realistic and diverse outreach strategies designed to reach a broad audience and ensure genuine community and family engagement.
Fair – 2	Family & Community Involvement		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the application (p. 40-42) the applicant describes evidence of the parents and community role in the development of the school. The applicant articulates an initial townhall meeting held in June of 2018 where concerned parents and youth leaders from Bessemer and surrounding cities discussed educational concerns and brainstormed how to help students succeed, including a list of characteristics of an ideal school for their students. To add, the applicant states a public education forum was hosted in February of 2020 by the Founder and Head of School to discuss the school’s unique offerings. The applicant reports attendance and input from a homeschool family, residents of Bessemer, and details the excitement of a group of Hispanic parents; however, the details are limited and do not include sufficient information (e.g., sign-in logs, meeting minutes, etc.) to confirm the participants present at the meeting and the topics discussed. For example, the applicant references a Google survey (p. 41) as an attempt to gauge interest in the school’s programming and reports that 100% of the people who completed the survey believe the STEM aviation program would be beneficial to Bessemer City students. However, the applicant did not include a copy of the survey or the actual survey results. During the interview, the applicant reported that 50 parents completed the survey; however, the applicant did provide any further detail as to how parents and community members have been involved in the development of the proposed school. In the application (p. 41) the applicant group documents the creation of a petition to gain community support and reports the applicant has gained 143 supporters to date but does not provide a copy of the petition and the collected signatures. While the applicant group describes Walk to School Thursdays (p. 41) as a way to bring the school and community together, the applicant group provides no further detail as to how it plans to engage family and community support from the time of approval through the school’s opening date. During the interview, the applicant group stated that the school plans to recruit outside of the community, as well as in some of the neighboring cities that have shown interest in the school. 		
Educational Program Capacity			
Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 15	Excellent 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has not provided the key members of the school's leadership team and who will be responsible for development and opening of the school. There is <i>little or no description</i> of the team’s individual and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided key members of the school's leadership team who will be responsible for development and opening of the school, though it is unclear if all members have been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key members of the school's leadership team who will be responsible for development and opening of the school have been identified. There is a description of the team’s individual and collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key members of the school's leadership team who will be responsible for development and opening of the school have been identified and are actively involved in school development.

<p>collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, and/or no team capacity in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership, administration, and governance; • Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; • Performance management; • Cultural competence/inclusiveness; • Family and community engagement; • Special populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has provided limited or insufficient detail on some or all of the following descriptions of the team’s individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, which includes team capacity in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership, administration, and governance; • Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; • Performance management; • Cultural competence/inclusiveness; • Family and community engagement; • Special populations. 	<p>qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, which includes team capacity in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership, administration, and governance; • Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; • Performance management; • Cultural competence/inclusiveness; • Family and community engagement; • Special populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has comprehensively and convincingly demonstrated strong individual and collective team qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, and addressed team capacity in areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership, administration, and governance; • Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; • Performance management; • Cultural competence/inclusiveness; • Family and community engagement; • Special populations.
Fair – 3	Educational Program Capacity		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the application (p. 44-45) demonstrates the identification of the Head of School, the Director of Operations, as well as six board members with experience ranging from education administration, teaching, professional counseling, aviation, and engineering, • A review of the Director Operation’s resumé details her prior education experience as a Principal, Assistant Principal, Reading Instructor, Adjunct professor, and Professor. To add, her resumé and interest letter further highlights her academic experience (e.g., student supervision, academic oversight and instructional planning) and management expertise (e.g., teacher and staff recruitment, fundraising, budgeting and financial management, community and parent involvement, and policy implementation), thus demonstrating her ability to successfully implement the school’s design. A review of the Head of School’s resumé highlights her instructional experience as a teacher and demonstrates she has served as an elementary teacher or reading interventionist at six schools since 2013 and currently serves as the lead teacher at a local elementary school. While the DOP and HOS have collective qualifications for implementing the school design, neither of the individuals resúmes indicate they have knowledge or skills in cultural competences and inclusivity. During the interview, the applicant reported that the school has had a change in leadership and further stated that the school’s identified principal has experience as a professor at a historically Black college and has worked as principal in the Black community. The applicant further highlighted the school leader’s experience working in low-performing schools in the Birmingham area and has a reputation for turning schools around. However, the applicant did not provide specific details on how the school’s leadership team demonstrates cultural competence and inclusiveness. 		
Section Score 55/103	Section 1: Educational Program		

SECTION 2. OPERATIONS PLAN - 69 points

Organization Structure & Partnerships			
Weak 1	Fair 3	Very Good 5	Excellent 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has failed to submit organizational charts. The organization charts do not delineate the roles and responsibilities of, and lines of authority and reporting among, the governing board, school leader, management team, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts document clear lines of authority and reporting within the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has partially submitted organizational charts. Organization charts <i>partially</i> include the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, school leader, management team, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts document lines of authority and reporting within the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has submitted organizational charts. The organization charts include roles and responsibilities of the governing board, school leader, management team, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has submitted organizational charts. Organization charts clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of, and lines of authority and reporting among, the governing board, school leader, management team, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. Evidence is provided that partnerships with such external organizations are in place.
Excellent - 7	Organization Structure & Partnerships		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant submitted organizational charts as Attachment 17 for year zero, years 1-4, and year 5 and beyond. The applicant articulates the importance of the shared leadership and includes plans for one advisory board (p. 52) consisting of eight members comprised of students, parents, faculty, administration, and one community member but does not list these individuals by name. The applicant makes evident the roles and responsibilities of each governing board member as well as the advisory board, and states it is the HOS's responsibility to develop and implement the school's academic programs and operations (p. 48). However, the applicant does not clearly articulate all the responsibilities for members of the school's leadership (i.e., DOO, DOC, DOD, DSS) or the Finance Director. Finally, the applicant does not articulate the involvement of any external organizations that will play a role in the managing of the school. During the interview, the applicant described the roles and responsibilities of each member of the school's leadership team. For example, the Director of Curriculum (DOC) will be responsible for student data analysis and managing the school's curricula while the Director of Development (DOD) will be responsible for seeking out additional funding opportunities and oversight of the school's strategic plan. During the interview, the applicant group also stated there are no external partnerships involved in the management of the school. 		
Governing Board			
Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 10	Excellent 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided little or no description of the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. The applicant describes the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board. The applicant failed to identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has described the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board, how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies, the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board, the key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board, though has done so in a limited and non-specific manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has described the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. The applicant describes the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board. The applicant identifies key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has clearly outlined and described the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. The applicant clearly describes the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board. The applicant clearly identifies and outlines key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. Individuals who will serve key roles on the board have been identified and are committed.

Excellent – 15	Governing Board
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant states the Head of School and the Board will interact to set appropriate goals for academics, operations, and fiscal management of the school (p. 48). A review of the application (p. 50) makes evident a three committee (i.e., Executive, Governance, and Finance) structure within the board and further states Ad Hoc committees will be incorporated as needed. The applicant also states the Board’s primary goals are to provide evidence of compliance and adherence to the Alabama State Ethics law and communicate with Knowledge U’s students, families, and staff. The applicant documents the Board will hold monthly meetings and these meetings will be public and advertised to all stakeholders via email, mail, text, and the school’s website. The applicant also documents the Board will comply with all aspects of the Open Meeting Act (p. 50). The applicant (p. 48-49) explains that the composition of the board will include a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary and outlines roles and responsibilities for each member. The applicant also states (p. 48) the Board currently consists of seven members and will expand to ten members within the first five years, to reflect the school’s student enrollment. The applicant further states (p. 50) that each board member will be required to serve on at least one of the three committees during their term and participate in yearly professional development and training. In the application (p. 50-51), the applicant provides brief descriptions of all board members and the HOS and states it has included resumés for each board member as attachments; however, only the resumés for the HOS and DOO are included in the attachments submitted with the application. A review of each board members’ description demonstrates the proposed Board Chair has a background and knowledge in higher education, while others have identified skills and expertise in the areas of K-12 education, school counseling, business management, aviation, and engineering. The applicant notes the governing board is inclusive of members of the community and a parent representative. While board members have been listed and identified within the application, the applicant did not provide evidence of committal from the Board’s members.

Staffing Plans			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<p>The applicant has provided little or no information on the staffing chart for the school (Commission template) with little or no notes or roster to identify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year one positions, as well as positions to be added during the five (5) year charter contract; Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel; The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; Operational and support staff. 	<p>The applicant has provided a limited and/or incomplete staffing chart for the school with insufficient notes and/or a roster to identify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year one positions, as well as positions to be added during the five (5) year charter contract; Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel; The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; Operational and support staff. 	<p>The applicant has provided a completed staffing chart for the school with accompanying notes or roster to identify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year one positions, as well as positions to be added during the five (5) year charter contract; Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel; The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; Operational and support staff. 	<p>The applicant has provided a comprehensive and complete staffing chart for the school with thorough notes and connection to the needs of the student population. The roster identifies, minimally, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year one positions, as well as positions to be added during the five (5) year charter contract; Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel; The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; Operational and support staff.

Excellent - 4	Staffing Plans
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the application (p. 54) documents the inclusion of a Staffing Chart detailing the staffing plan for years zero through five but does not provide details of how the school’s staffing structure connects to the needs of the student population. The applicant lists five (5) administrative positions (i.e., HOS, DOO, DOC, (DSS) and a DOD) the Staffing Chart documents four administrative positions for SYs 2021-2024 and adds the Finance Director in SY 2023-2024 and the DOD for SYs 2024-2026 but does not include the Finance Director and DOD in the budget (attachments 28 and 31) for school years three through five. The staffing chart demonstrates the employment of 15 general education teachers, one counselor and one enrichment teacher in year one, and a gradual increase to thirty-seven instructional staff members (30 general education teachers, two counselors, three enrichment teachers, and two special education teachers) by year five. The staffing chart also includes operational and support staff members- one office and one cafeteria manager, three cafeteria workers, a nurse and a custodian in year one and with the addition of one custodian (SY2023-2024) will grow to a total of eight non-instructional staff members in year five (SY 2025-2026). During the interview, the applicant stated that the school’s staff will grow as enrollment increases and provided a rationale for the increase in staff positions. Additionally, the applicant stated that the school’s goal is to maintain small class sizes and use a two-teacher model for instruction and involve support staff in the student intervention program.

Professional Development			
Weak 1	Fair 3	Very Good 5	Excellent 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the core components of teacher and staff professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the proposed educational program; how the professional development plan will include the development and practice of cultural competence for all staff; building staff capacity in the collection, analysis and use of performance data to improve student learning; and the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a limited description of the core components of teacher and staff professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the proposed educational program; how the professional development plan will include the development and practice of cultural competence for all staff; building staff capacity in the collection, analysis and use of performance data to improve student learning; and the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a detailed description of the core components of teacher and staff professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the proposed educational program; how the professional development plan will include the development and practice of cultural competence for all staff, building staff capacity in the collection, analysis and use of performance data to improve student learning; and the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally. There is a clear understanding of the capacity required to effectively deliver professional development training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a detailed and thorough description of the core components of teacher and staff professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the proposed educational program; how the professional development plan will include the development and practice of cultural competence for all staff; building staff capacity in the collection, analysis and use of performance data to improve student learning; and the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will allow for flexibility to meet individualized staff needs as well as align with collective schoolwide goals. There is a clear understanding of the capacity required to effectively deliver professional development training.
Fair – 2	Professional Development (PD)		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant states the HOS is the instructional leader and will observe teachers, provide feedback, and analyze trends across the school in order to provide Professional Development (PD) opportunities (p. 56) and hire a DOC in year one to assist with observations and feedback and support data analysis (p. 58). Additionally, the applicant includes a list of the following PD opportunities for Knowledge U teachers: classroom observations and feedback debrief, data analysis and action plan meetings, curriculum development and review, and lesson review and analysis to name a few (p. 59-61). The list also includes a description and expected outcomes of each PD opportunity. The applicant also provided a year-long PD schedule (p. 61-62). To add, a review of the application (submitted in section 2- Performance Management (p. 62-64) the applicant states how these PD components will support the implementation of the proposed educational program. A review of the application and PD opportunities (p. 59-62) provides a clear plan to build teacher capacity and use data to inform instruction. The applicant describes the school's month-long, summer PD plan (p. 62) demonstrating the inclusion of PD sessions on instructional practices and curricular planning and assessments. To add, the summer PD schedule also documents a School Culture Development series including topics on students' habits of success, behavior, school routines, and trauma-sensitivity training. However, the PD schedule or list of opportunities does not document how the school will develop teachers in the area of cultural competency. During the interview, the applicant cited teacher recruitment and the interview questions as a way to identify culturally competent staff but did not provide specific ways in which the school will provide PD in the area of cultural competency. The applicant states the HOS will serve as the instructional leader and PD will be conducted internally and will include various topics during the summer and throughout the school year. The applicant also indicates it plans to hire a director of curriculum in year one to assist with observations and feedback and support teachers with data analysis. However, the application does not provide details on whether or not the PD will be individualized or uniform. During the interview, the applicant stated that PD will be individualized and small group, and teachers will participate in PD weekly. The applicant further stated that PD will include a review of data, assessment training, instructional strategies, and culture. The applicant also stated that the school's leadership team has not identified outside PD for teachers but does plan to have teachers visit the model school in Nashville, TN. 		

Performance Management			
Weak 1	Fair 3	Very Good 5	Excellent 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of mission-specific academic goals and targets are unclear in terms of the measures or assessments the school plans to use, and/or overall are not specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic, relevant, and time-bound. There is little to no description of how the school will measure and evaluate school mission-specific academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the mission-specific academic goals and targets are clear in terms of the measures or assessments the school plans to use, and/or some are specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic, relevant, and time bound. The description of how the school will measure and evaluate school mission-specific academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract, is lacking in sufficient detail to determine the potential for implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided 3-5 mission-specific academic and organizational goals and targets. Goals are clearly stated in terms of the measures or assessments the school plans to use, are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART). There is a detailed description of how the school will measure and evaluate school mission-specific academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided 3-5 mission-specific academic and organizational goals and targets. All goals are clearly and completely stated in terms of the measures or assessments the school plans to use, are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART). There is a compelling and convincing description of how the school will measure and evaluate school mission-specific academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. There is a plan for corrective action a school will take if it falls short of goals at the schoolwide, classroom, or individual student level.
Fair-3	Performance Management		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the application makes evident the school's goal is to outscore the other Bessemer county schools by 5 percentage points in reading and math and to demonstrate a year and a half of growth in reading and math for each student by year three (submitted in section 1-Educational Program Overview). The applicant also states (p. 62) the mission of Knowledge U requires all students master the foundational areas of literacy, number sense, oral language, and social and emotional development. To add, a review of the Knowledge U Assessments attachment states the school will utilize in-class formative assessments and will administer the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessment and STEP Assessment to all students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to assess students' needs, measure growth, and project proficiency in reading and math. During the interview, the applicant described clear goals for measuring student progress on the Alabama State assessment, as well as the school's in-house assessment, NWEA MAP test, and the school's in-house reading assessment. While the application states the school's goal is for all students to grasp the foundational skills to remain on track year to year, the applicant does not provide evidence of how it will measure academic progress throughout the year, at the end of the year, and throughout the term of the contract. During the interview, the applicant stated that the school goal is to meet the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards by year two of the charter. The applicant also listed the school's goals to be 5% or higher than the Bessemer school district, for students to show one-and-a-half years of academic growth but did not specify the measure, and for students to show 80% mastery or higher on the NWEA MAP growth assessment that will be given three times a year. The applicant also stated the school will assess students' reading levels using the STEP reading assessment and that the school's goal is for all students in grades K-2 to demonstrate mastery of 80% or higher. As for behavior, the applicant group stated they do not have specific behavior goals aligned to their mission but plan to reduce the number of office and counseling referrals and to incorporate Tier II and Tier III behavior plans for students in need. While the school identified specific assessments with some measures, the applicant did not provide sufficient detail of how the school will measure these goals throughout the term of the charter contract. 		

Facilities			
Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 8	Excellent 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little or no description of the steps already taken to identify prospective facilities as well as the process for identifying and securing a facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a description of the steps already taken to identify prospective facilities as well as the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants the applicant is employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. It is unclear if these steps are sufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has identified prospective facilities as well as the process for securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants the applicant is employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has secured an adequate and suitable facility or can show a contingent facility agreement.
Fair-2	Facilities		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the application notes that a site selection is in process in partnership with the Bessemer Airport Authority, no plan for the securing the facility, plans for renovations, or financing is stated in the application. Furthermore, the Application states on p. 64 that a letter of commitment for the facility is included in attachment 27.2; however, that document merely shows support from the Bessemer Airport. During the interview, the applicant stated that the Bessemer airport is enthused about having the school located on the grounds and has located a space for the school; however, the school and the airport are still in negotiations and are awaiting final approval from the airport authority. 		
Startup & Ongoing Operations			
Weak 1	Fair 5	Very Good 10	Excellent 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided little or no information or a description of its start-up plan for the school. The proposed start-up budget is not clearly aligned to stated goals. The applicant has provided little or no information or a description of the school transportation plan. The applicant has provided little or no information or a description of the plans for food service and other significant operational or ancillary services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided some or part of the start-up plan for the school, though is missing tasks and lacks details in some or all of the required plans. The proposed start-up budget is partially aligned to stated goals. The applicant has provided a limited description or insufficient detail for one, some, or all of the school transportation plan. The applicant has provided a limited description or insufficient detail for the plans for food service and other significant operational or ancillary services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individual(s). Said plan is in alignment with the proposed start-up budget. The applicant has provided a school transportation plan with arrangements for prospective students, daily transportation needs, and a description of how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events. The applicant has outlined the plans for food service and other significant operational or ancillary services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant has provided a clear, compelling, and detailed start-up plan for the school specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals, and is in alignment with the proposed start-up budget. The applicant has provided a comprehensive school transportation plan with arrangements for prospective students, daily transportation needs, and a description of how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events and has strong and demonstrated capacity for its plan and for its plan. The applicant has a comprehensive plan for food service and other significant operational or ancillary services.
Fair – 3	Startup & Ongoing Operations		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application includes a startup plan with a 19-month view of tasks and responsible parties. Though general tasks are noted in the start-up plan, there are several large and costly tasks including facility remodeling, curriculum purchasing, and marketing/enrollment that are not included in the start-up budget plan or in the 8-year budget attachment. Furthermore, the application and 8-year budget do not show the insurance policy agreement expense with Gallagher 360. Start-up expenses are not clearly articulated in the start-up budget to show the plans and goals. During the interview, the applicant listed making application to the New Schools for Alabama grant program, supplemental programs, and a fundraiser of \$250,000 as sources for startup grants to assist with facility remodeling and curricular purchases. However, estimated start-up expenses were not provided by the applicant. The application states that transportation will be provided for students more than 2 miles from the school and the 8-year budget attachment registers the expense assumption for either contracted services as noted or in-house bus services. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application attachment for Food Service Plan states that they will contract food services with oversight by the Operations Manager; however, no other details are provided for other ancillary operational services except security services noted on page 66 though that position is not included in the staffing plan. During the interview, the applicant group stated that the school's operations director has experience with setting up the food service plan and is currently working to ensure everything is in place but did not provide further detail on this or other ancillary services the school plans to use.
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Operations Capacity

Weak 1	Fair 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
<p>There is little or no description of the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, and/or little to no capacity in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Professional development Performance management General operations Facilities management 	<p>The applicant has described some of the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, and/or demonstrated limited capacity in some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Professional development Performance management General operations Facilities management 	<p>The applicant has described the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Professional development Performance management General operations Facilities management 	<p>The applicant has provided a comprehensive and compelling description of the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, with strong capacity in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Professional development Performance management General operations Facilities management

Fair – 2	Operations Capacity
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<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the application (p. 68-70) the applicant outlines the expertise and experience of the HOS, proposed DOO, and the identified board members. The HOS, DOO, and three of the board members (including the proposed Board Chair) have a wide range of educational experience and two additional board members have long-time business and project management expertise. A review of the application (p. 68) also demonstrates the proposed DOO has extensive school leadership, operations, finance, professional development, and performance management experience but does not include a person with facilities experience and does not demonstrate the HOS has the school leadership experience. To add, on p. 70 of the application the applicant notes the leadership team does not currently include a person with a background in facilities or finances; however, the applicant states the board does have a financial advisor with over thirty years of commercial and investment banking experience and has previously served on multiple boards for local and national nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, the application states on p. 73 that there will be a Finance Director but then later states on p. 75 that a finance service provider will be contracted.
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Section Score 38/69	Section 2: Operations Plan
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SECTION 3. FINANCIAL PLAN – 20 points

Financial Plan & Financial Management Capacity			
Not Included 1	Weak 5	Fair 15	Excellent 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant did not provide a completed operating budget. • The applicant has provided little or no detail in the budget narrative. It minimally or did not address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Realistic student enrollment projections ○ Anticipated funding sources ○ The school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs ○ Year one cash flow contingency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an operating budget, though it is vague and missing information. • The applicant has provided a budget narrative description, though it lacks sufficient detail to determine its viability and/or the applicant has insufficiently addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Realistic student enrollment projections ○ Anticipated funding sources ○ The school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs ○ Year one cash flow contingency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a completed operating budget, which uses the per-pupil revenue guidance provided by the Commission. • The applicant has provided a detailed budget narrative, which includes an evidence-based description of assumptions and revenue estimates, the basis and calculations for revenue projections, staffing levels and expenditures, and the degree to which the school/campus budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). The applicant has sufficiently addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic student enrollment projections • Anticipated funding sources • The school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs • Year one cash flow contingency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a completed operating budget, which uses the per-pupil revenue guidance provided by the Commission and demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the school’s finances. • The applicant has provided a detailed and comprehensive line item budget narrative, which includes a description of assumptions and revenue estimates, the basis and calculations for revenue projections, staffing levels, and expenditures, the degree to which the school/campus budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). The description aligns to the educational program and clearly addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic student enrollment projections • Anticipated funding sources • The school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs • Year one cash flow contingency.
Weak – 3	Financial Plan & Financial Management Capacity		
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application notes revenues sources, including CSP of \$1.5M over several years including startup and USDA food reimbursement of \$5.30 per student per day but those revenues are not included in the 8-year budget model. • The application notes in the budget narrative that several expenses are “in-kind” but also includes a cost confusing the assumption in the 8-year budget model. There are also expenses noted in the application that are not included such as outsourced financial services and facilities and capital expenses in the startup year to be funded with CSP. There is an error in the calculation of the 8-year budget in the startup year that does not properly calculate the total expense and thereby carries forward too much money into year 1. Without this error the school would be in deficit by \$49,327 in year 1. Finally, the application includes a contingency plan; however, the plan merely states the reduction of all expenses to align with student enrollment. Furthermore, on p. 78 of the application, the applicant states that hiring a financial advisor (which is not accounted for in the 8-year budgeted expenses) will “help receive national funding.” During the interview, the applicant was unaware of an error in the calculation but stated any budget deficits will be remedied with grant money received by the school. The applicant group stated the school is currently in the process of obtaining grants and plans to apply for the CSP grant of \$1.5 million as well as the Walton Foundation grant. 		
Section Score 3/20	Section 3: Financial Plan		

SECTION 4. OVERALL ALIGNMENT AND VIABILITY – 15 points

Overall Alignment & Viability	
Insufficient 1	Weak 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant team does not appear to have a clear understanding of the academic program proposed or a strong implementation strategy in place. Additionally, there are serious concerns about the financial viability of the school and/or the capacity of the leadership team to effectively operate a high-quality charter school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge around the academic program is limited to one or two individuals. There are some significant concerns about the financial viability of the school and/or the capacity of the leadership team to effectively operate a high-quality charter school. In the event that a leadership team has not been identified, the plan to identify an effective leadership team is insufficient or unconvincing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most members of the team are well versed in the academic program and a plan for implementation is in place. There are no significant concerns about the financial viability of the school or the capacity of the leadership team to effectively operate a high-quality charter school. In the event that a leadership team has not been identified, the plan to identify an effective leadership team is sound and convincing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members of the team are well versed in the academic program and provided compelling information in response to interview inquiries. There are no concerns about the financial viability of the school or the capacity of the leadership team to effectively operate a high-quality charter school. The leadership team identified has a track record of success.
Insufficient - 1	Overall Alignment & Viability
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the interview, the school’s executive director outlined the duties and responsibilities of each team member and highlighted areas of expertise to demonstrate the team’s ability to implement the school’s academic programming. However, the team members were not present – attendance was limited to the executive director. Therefore, the review team was not able to determine whether each team member is well-versed in the academic program. While a clear leadership team with a HOS, DOO, board chair and four additional board members, the team’s experience and expertise (p. 68-70) does not provide sufficient evidence of the team’s ability to provide successful academic, operational, and financial oversight to Knowledge U. Additionally, the school’s budget is currently not balanced and includes a large deficit in year one and the applicant was unable to provide specific details on how the school is financially viable and has limited evidence on the sources of funding.
Section Score – 1/15	Section 4: Overall Alignment and Viability

Experienced Operators if Applicable	
Weak 1	Fair 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school intends to contract with an ESP for the management of the school or substantial educational services, the applicant has not addressed the following: Evidence of the nonprofit ESP’s success in serving student populations that are similar to the anticipated student population, including demonstrated academic achievement, successful management of nonacademic school functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school intends to contract with an ESP for the management of the school or substantial educational services, the applicant has partially addressed the following: Evidence of the nonprofit ESP’s success in serving student populations that are similar to the anticipated student population, including demonstrated academic achievement, successful management of nonacademic school functions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school intends to contract with an ESP for the management of the school or substantial educational services, the applicant has addressed the following: Evidence of the nonprofit ESP’s success in serving student populations that are similar to the anticipated student population, including demonstrated academic achievement, successful management of nonacademic school functions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the school intends to contract with an ESP for the management of the school or substantial educational services, the applicant has comprehensively and in detail addressed the following: Evidence of the nonprofit ESP’s success in serving student populations that are similar to the anticipated population, including demonstrated academic achievement, successful management of nonacademic school functions.
N/A	Experienced Operators if Applicable
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Applicable: This topic does not apply to this applicant.
Section Score- N/A	Section: Experienced Operators

Conflicts 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):		Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Code of Ethics Policy.</i> • <i>Conflict of Interest Policy.</i> 		
The applicant has provided a signed, conflict of interest statement for every:		No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applicant team member</i> • <i>Identified board member</i> 		
The applicant has provided a statement of Assurances agreeing to requirements should approval be granted.		No
<i>Evaluative Comments:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has provided a detailed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy indicating how Board members should conduct themselves as members of the board and outlines potential conflicts of interests for the board’s members and makes evident their commitment to not engage in said conflicts but does not include signatures from the board or applicant team. • A review of the application and its attachments reveals the absence of a signed conflict of interest statement from the board and its members. • While the applicant provided a Statement of Assurance document as an attachment to the application, the attached document lacks the signature page. 	

¹For purposes of this rubric, The Alabama Public Charter School Commission uses the definition from the National Center for **culturally responsive** Educational Systems, which holds that cultural responsiveness is the ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of your own culture as well as those from other cultures. The committee will consider factors such as the applicant group’s connectedness with the intended student population and the applicant group’s ability to provide programming that will serve the needs and interests of the likely student population.