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## CHARTER STAKEHOLDER ROLES CLEARLY DEFINED BY STATE LAW

**O**HIO'S SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, aka charter schools, appropriately defines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. The organizational structure loosely parallels that of traditional public schools: high-level oversight by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE); ongoing oversight, monitoring and technical assistance provided by sponsors; key policy-setting, performance goal setting/monitoring and decision making by boards; and, day-to-day operations managed by individual superintendents and school leaders or through services provided by contracted educational service providers.

### OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Ohio Department of Education plays dual roles, with responsibilities related to the oversight of sponsors assigned to the Office of Community Schools, and authorizer responsibilities assigned to the Office of School Sponsorship.

**Key oversight responsibilities include:**

- Granting, renewing and, as appropriate, revoking, contracted sponsorship authority;
- Assessing all sponsors' performance based on school academic outcomes, compliance, and quality practices using the recently implemented Sponsor Performance Review (SPR);
- Ongoing monitoring of all sponsor performance, including review of corrective action plans, as required to address deficiencies;
- Overseeing all sponsors on probation and limiting sponsorship authority, as appropriate; and,
- Providing technical assistance to all sponsors.
- Preparing annual report on charter schools for key policy makers.

### SPONSORS / AUTHORIZERS

Ohio earns high marks from national charter organizations for offering a variety of sponsor options to schools – from universities (or their designees) and not-for-profit organizations to traditional school districts (comprising about 60% of authorizers in Ohio) and educational service centers (ESCs), and ODE's own Office of School Sponsorship.

**Key responsibilities include:**

- Reviewing and either accepting or rejecting of new school proposals (based on well-developed, transparent sponsor application and scoring rubric);
- Establishing and negotiating clear, meaningful goals and expectations outlined in the contract between sponsors and governing boards of schools;
- On-going oversight and monitoring of contract school performance metrics, with a focus on compliance with relevant state and federal laws, as well as terms of the contract between the sponsor and governing school boards;
- Providing technical assistance to governing boards and schools, as needed;
- Conducting required annual school opening assurances, ongoing compliance assessments and school site visits;
- Reviewing school financial and enrollment records on a monthly basis;
- Reporting to ODE on issues of significant concern or school's failure to comply with legal obligations;
- Requiring, reviewing and approving corrective action plans to address issues of concern, when and if they arise; and,
- Taking appropriate action with schools that fail to meet expectations: probation, suspension or, in the most serious situations, closure.

### SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARDS

All public charter schools operate under the authority of not-for-profit boards of directors comprised of a minimum of five volunteer members. In some cases, they receive a modest stipend that must be approved by resolution of the board and under state law cannot exceed \$5,000 per year. Board members must be free of conflicts of interest, must undergo criminal background checks, and their meetings and records are subject to "Sunshine" and public records laws.

**Key responsibilities include:**

- Negotiating and agreeing to the contract metrics and expectations with the sponsor/authorizer;
- Overseeing school operations to assure compliance with state and federal laws, and requirements outlined in each board's contract with the school's sponsor including academic and financial performance expectations for the school;
- Establishing and monitoring of compliance with various policies that inform school operations;
- Serving as good stewards of public funds by providing transparent fiscal oversight; and,
- Hiring, monitoring, and evaluating school operator performance, and if necessary, developing and/or monitoring corrective action plans.

### SCHOOL OPERATORS / MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Boards may choose to hire and contract with individuals to provide various leadership and operation tasks, or not-for-profit or for-profit educational service providers or management organizations assigned to perform all or selected school operations and human resource tasks.

**Key contracted responsibilities may include:**

- Managing and in some cases providing day-to-day school operations, including facilities, technology, food service and safety/security;
- Assuring statutory and contractual compliance;
- Providing strategic budget and fiscal management;
- Managing personnel/HR, including recruitment, hiring, supervision, benefits management and professional development;
- Providing curriculum in alignment with state standards and performance contract metrics;
- Servicing data needs, including student testing, student records and input/upload of required ODE data such as enrollment;
- Providing student services such as discipline, athletics, and extra-curricular activities;
- Acquiring or providing PR, marketing and recruitment; and,
- Coordinating stakeholder relations/communications.