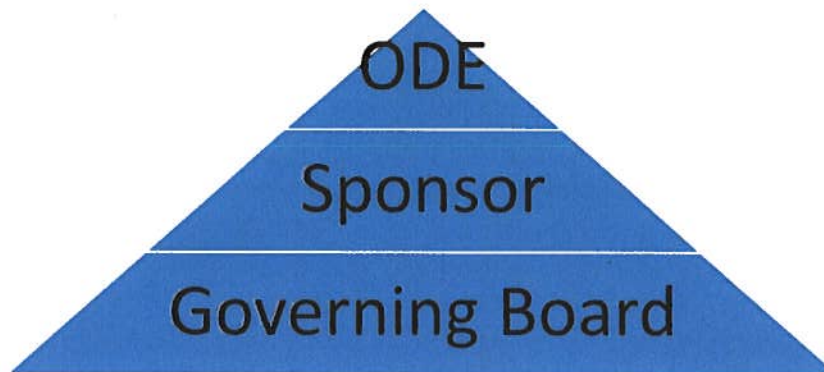


Roles and Responsibilities



ODE Responsibilities

The Department focuses on oversight of community school sponsors and is assigned key responsibilities such as: approving and renewing sponsors; revoking sponsorship authority as necessary; monitoring sponsor effectiveness; evaluating sponsor performance; placing sponsors on probation as necessary; reviewing all charter contracts between sponsors and schools; providing technical assistance; and preparing the annual community school report.

Recently, the Office of Community Schools became of part of the Ohio Department of Education's Center for Continuous Improvement under Senior Executive Director Dr. Marva K. Jones.

Sponsor Responsibilities

Under Ohio law, Sponsors are assigned certain key responsibilities as well as those outlined in each community school contract:

- Thoroughly vetting new school applicants and entering into initial contracts, renewing or non-renewing school contracts based on rigorous assessment of school performance and compliance,
- Providing school oversight, monitoring, technical assistance and intervention (when needed), conducting at least two site visits annually, as well as prior to opening each school year— providing written assurances of compliance to the department.
- Meet with school boards, review school financial and enrollment records on a monthly basis (written reports are made available to ODE upon request),
- Notify ODE of the school's failure to comply with state/federal laws, contractual obligations or of any school financial difficulty.
- The sponsor will place schools on probation as necessary, demand corrective action plans to address issues of concern and will remove schools from probation upon successful implementation of corrective actions.
- Suspend operations of non-compliant schools. Contracts between the Sponsor and the School (available online at ODE's website) specify many items as required by state law; including the educational program, academic goals, performance standards, admission standards, dismissal procedures, policy requirements, financial audit requirements, facilities, teacher qualifications, insurance requirements, financial plan and budget, transportation.
- The Sponsor may assume operation of the School should it be unable to complete operations until the end of the school year.

School Governing Authority—School Board Responsibilities

Community School Boards are required to have a minimum of five members that have passed a criminal background check and to be free of conflicts of interest with the school. Board members demonstrate this through completing an annual conflict of interest statement which is then provided to the Sponsor. Richland Academy requires that all potential board members have the approval of the sponsor before appointment to the community school board (per contract). All board meetings are public (at least six per year); public notice is required for each meeting as outlined in state Sunshine laws. Annually, board members are required to complete training for Open meetings and Sunshine Laws. Key responsibilities are:

- Fiscal management and accountability of public funds
- Operate and maintain the school's status as a nonprofit corporation
- Oversight of all aspects of school operations and performance—full compliance with state laws and all the requirements of the charter contract signed with the Sponsor
- Submission of annual reports summarizing school activities, student progress in meeting goals and performance standards, financial status to sponsors and students' parents or guardians within four months of the end of each school year
- If not contracting with an operator to be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, the board is responsible for hiring, evaluating and terminating school leaders responsible for school operations.
- Report in writing every month to the sponsor statistics on financials, enrollment, staff and teacher turnover, expulsions, suspensions. Fiscal information includes total assets, current assets, total liabilities, gross revenue, total number of students. The fiscal officer must be licensed and bonded.
- Provide learning opportunities for at least 25 students for a minimum of 920 hours per school year
- Purchase and maintain appropriate liability insurance coverage providing for the general liability of the school at all times as defined in the charter contract with the Sponsor.
- Employ an attorney that works independently from the management company
- Ensure that full time employees have health and other benefits including STERS and SERS where applicable
- Adoption of all policies and procedures as required by state law
- Oversight of academics, curriculum, testing and all compliance with state requirements regarding student achievement

School Operator Responsibilities

Not all community schools have Operators—a board may enter into a contract (agreement) with a management organization that will be responsible for the day-to-day operations. The responsibilities are outlined in each agreement/contract and may include the following key responsibilities:

- Compliance with state laws and administrative rules
- Day-to-day operations, including compliance with the school's charter contract with its sponsor
- Selection and implementation of the school's curriculum that aligns with state standards
- Implementation of all state mandated and other testing
- Student growth and achievement measures
- Oversight of all special education services—including compliance with all state and federal rules and laws
- All student services (health, social services, transportation)

- Human Resources Services—hiring, discipline, professional development, training, proper certifications and qualifications
- Technology—computers and infrastructure
- Security, Facilities, Food service
- Budgeting and fiscal management
- Communication with all stakeholders of the school: parents (guardians), students, staff, board, Sponsor and the local community