

Community Engagement in the Charter Application Processes

High-quality authorizing practices rely on **intentional community engagement** to align schools with community needs, build trust, and ensure accountability. CSI recognizes that **centering the community** in decision-making fosters transparency, strengthens school performance, and empowers stakeholders, especially marginalized voices.



New School Application Process

CSI's new school application process requires that applicants provide compelling evidence of **community need, support, and involvement** and that the proposed model will **address educational inequities** and lead to improved student outcomes for all students.

CSI actively involves parents and the community from the start of the application process to ensure the proposed school aligns with local needs and priorities:



Application Development

Founding teams are expected to have regularly scheduled and diverse opportunities for **soliciting community feedback** on the application and the school's goals. Founding teams also gather support through letters of intent to enroll and letters from community organizations, ensuring **broad community representation** in governance structures.



Application Review

In line with best practices, CSI posts the application online, ensuring **transparency**. Community members participate in a community meeting to provide testimony, a crucial part of CSI's review process. This meeting offers an inclusive, accessible platform for community feedback. CSI also welcomes feedback from the geographic district in which the applicant proposes to locate.



Community Meeting

Applicants host a meeting in the community of the proposed school, serving as an opportunity for applicants to **engage the community** by sharing information about the proposed school and addressing questions and concerns from the community. It also allows the CSI Review Team to gather additional information to inform its review.

Prior to any application decision-making the CSI Board invites **public comment**, allowing community members an opportunity to provide feedback for the board to consider when making the final decision. This open forum is designed to ensure that feedback from the community can be amplified.

Renewal Application Process

The authority to operate a charter school is granted through a limited-term, renewable contract. Contract renewal is not automatic – it must be earned through strong academic results, financial viability, and operational effectiveness. One crucial component in evaluating schools' performance is through community engagement:

Community Feedback

CSI seeks input from school communities—parents, staff, and students (when appropriate)— via surveys or focus groups, promoting broad and inclusive engagement.

Renewal Site Visit

CSI includes stakeholder focus groups during site visits, ensuring a diverse range of community voices are heard. By leveraging neutral facilitators and ensuring meetings are accessible, CSI promotes transparent discussions around the school's renewal prospects.

Prior to any application decision-making the CSI Board invites **public comment**, allowing community members an opportunity to provide feedback for the board to consider when making the final decision. This open forum is designed to ensure that feedback from the community can be amplified.
