

Instructions & Timeline

Transfer of Community School Sponsorship

Contract Starts July 1, 2025

Deadline	Responsibility	Items to be Completed
09/30/2024	School	Application for Transfer of Community School Sponsorship is submitted
10/01/2024 – 12/31/2024	BGSU	Review and interview period <i>*Subject to approval of the Change in Sponsorship Request by DEW</i>
01/15/2025	BGSU	School is notified of recommendation to the BGSU Dean of EDHD and Provost and, If approved for sponsorship, a preliminary agreement is issued to the school
02/15/2025	School	Signed preliminary agreement is returned to the BGSU
02/28/2025	BGSU	School is sent a contract packet for completion
04/30/2025	School	Contract negotiations are finalized and all contract attachments are submitted
05/31/2025	School	School governing authority approves and signs the sponsorship contract and the original, signed contract is returned to the BGSU
06/30/2025	BGSU	Contract is signed by the BGSU Provost and executed

Sponsoring Priorities

Sponsorship encompasses a great deal of legal responsibility, and the College of Education & Human Development at Bowling Green State University takes our responsibilities seriously. At the core, it upholds its mission of providing the resources necessary to promote and sponsor an exceptional charter school environment throughout the state of Ohio.

Adhering to the *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing* as established by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), BGSU utilizes the principles and standards as the foundation of its strategic plan for quality school sponsoring.

Principles:

- Maintain High Standards
- Uphold School Autonomy
- Protect Student and Public Interest

Standards:

- Agency Commitment & Capacity
- Application Process & Decision-Making
- Performance Contracting
- On-Going Oversight and Evaluation
- Revocation and Renewal Decision-Making

In accordance with the sponsoring priorities, principles, and standards, this application includes prescriptive requirements and evaluation criteria. In order to preserve the highest standard of quality sponsorship, the school must provide sound evidence of meeting each selection criteria. Only schools that earn **at least 75%** of possible points will be considered for a preliminary agreement.

There are significant consequences for poor performance in academics, finance, operations, and governance. If a school does not perform well, it may be closed automatically by law or by the sponsor and could be subject to civil liability. It is imperative the school demonstrates its strong, evidence-based understanding of community school operations before BGSU would agree to sponsor the community school.

BGSU's Eligibility Threshold

In order to be eligible to apply, an existing community school must not have had its contract non-renewed or terminated by its present sponsor for compliance or financial reasons. An existing community school must also meet the following additional eligibility criteria in order to apply.

An existing community school must have an average of a "C" or higher on their most recent local report card in performance index and value added scores. In making that determination, neither score can be below a "D". For example, a "B" in overall value added and a "D" in performance index averages as a "C".

An existing community school must have received no monetary findings for recovery in any audits in the past two (2) years and must be fiscally sound. In addition, the community school must have not been on any substantive corrective action plans (at the sole discretion of BGSU) from their sponsor during the prior academic year. Finally, the school must not be an online school.

The school's governing authority and its members thereof must not have any current ethics or conflict violations filed with the Ethics Commission.

**Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee approval. BGSU will accept the application and either approve or deny based on the evaluation process.*

Community School Change of Sponsorship Request as Required by ORC 3314.034

The following excerpts are taken from the Change of Sponsor Guidance document provided by the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce. It is imperative to thoroughly read this guidance and follow the instructions as outlined. The full version of this guidance is available on DEW's website and BGSU's website (<https://www.bgsu.edu/education-and-human-development/office-of-charter-school-sponsorship.html>).

A community school seeking a change in sponsorship must submit a letter to the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce (DEW) stating the reasons for the request no later than **February 15th**. The community school must submit all supporting documents with the request. Within thirty (30) days of receiving the letter and supporting documentation or by **March 17th**, whichever is earlier, DEW shall grant or deny the request. If DEW determines the application is insufficient, the request will be denied.

Conditions Which Would Prohibit Contract with New Sponsor

...Any community school to which either of the following conditions apply shall be prohibited from entering into a contract with a new sponsor:

(1) The community school has received a grade of “D” or “F” for the performance index score... and an overall grade of “D” or “F” for the value added progress dimension... on the most recent Ohio School Report Card.

(2) The community school is one in which a majority of the students are enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program, and it has received a rating of “does not meet standards” for the annual growth and combined graduation rates on the most recent Ohio School Report Card.

Step One: Application for Sponsorship/Application Submission Requirements

To begin the process of transferring community school sponsorship, follow the timeline and application instructions. Resources are also available on the BGSU website and from state and local organizations dedicated to community (charter) school development. Contact April Samberg, BGSU Community School Liaison, at 419-372-5318 to indicate interest and discuss any initial questions.

Submit your application electronically. Emailed applications should be sent to April Samberg at asamberg@bgsu.edu. The subject of the email should be “Transfer of School Sponsorship Application- (School Name)”. All essay portion questions must be answered within the provided template. Any supplementary materials must be clearly labeled as separate attachments. Should a certain criterion not apply, a response stating why it is not applicable is required. No question should be left unanswered. The application must be received by BGSU no later than **June 15**.

Note: If you choose to email the application with a password for protection, make sure that the password is sent to the asamberg@bgsu.edu in a separate email to ensure the document can be opened. The subject for this email should be “Application Protection”. The body of the email should include the name of the proposed school and the password needed to open the documents.

Step Two: Review Period and Decision-Making

The BGSU Application Review Team includes a core group of individuals from BGSU College of Education & Human Development as well as external reviewers with expertise and sponsoring experience to make informed application decisions. Annually, and prior to reviewing applications, the Application Review Team is trained on the application process and materials; reviewer protocols; and the vision, mission, and strategic goals of community school sponsorship at BGSU. All reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form. Any reviewer found to have a real or perceived conflict of interest will be excused to ensure impartially in the review.

The rubric contains the application framework and evaluation criteria that are used as the primary factors for decision-making. Therefore, the school must present a comprehensive and evidence-based case for approval. The Application Review Team will conduct research into the applicant’s history with community schools, interview the applicant, and discuss the viability and appropriateness of the school with the Dean of Education and Human Development and Provost.

After evaluating and discussing all the data, each reviewer will individually complete a rubric. The combined scores and comments will be provided to the school in the final evaluation rubric. Should the Application Review Team need additional information to make a determination, the school will be contacted during the review period.

Step Three: Preliminary Agreement and Contract Term Length

In order to guarantee the most comprehensive and appropriate decisions are rendered, the BGSU only provides evidence-based recommendations to its Dean and Provost regarding applications for sponsorship. *Only schools that earn at least 75% of possible points will be considered for a preliminary agreement.*

If the application is approved, an in-person interview will be scheduled. After the interview, the Application Review Team, Dean of Education and Human Development, and Provost will make a decision whether to authorize a preliminary agreement. The school will be notified of the decision no later than **January 15th, of the current year.**

Should BGSU choose not to approve the application for sponsorship, the school will receive a notice that includes detailed reasons for the action and the effective date of denial.

Should BGSU choose to approve the application for sponsorship, the school and BGSU will execute a preliminary agreement describing the intent of the sponsor and the school to work in good faith towards the execution of a contract. The preliminary agreement will also be submitted to the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce.

BGSU currently offers sponsorship contracts for a maximum of five (5) years. The following table outlines the final evaluation rubric score and corresponding contract term length recommendations.

Final Evaluation Rubric Score	Recommended Contract Term Length
90.0% - 100%	Five (5) Year Recommendation
85.0% - 89.9%	Four (4) Year Recommendation
80.0% - 84.9%	Three (3) Year Recommendation
75.1% - 79.9%	Two (2) Year Recommendation
75.0%	One (1) Year Recommendation
74.9% or Lower	Not Recommended for Sponsorship

Step Four: Contract Negotiations and Attachments

BGSU will send the school a contract packet no later than **February 28th, of the current school year.** This packet includes the contract template, attachment cover pages, and a list of any other necessary documents. The school must submit clean FBI/BCI criminal background checks for all applicants and governing authority members. In addition, the school's governing authority members must complete five (5) hours of training on board governance and open meetings law.

The school's governing authority, leader, management company (if applicable), and attorney should review the contract to ensure accuracy of all terms. Should the school find any errors or wish to negotiate any contract term, it should discuss the proposed changes with BGSU as soon as possible.

All contract attachments must be received by BGSU no later than **April 30th**. The attachments will be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and appropriateness. Should any adjustments be required, the BGSU will notify the school in a timely manner and convey specific instructions for the adjustments.

Step Five: Contract Approval and Execution

After all contract terms are finalized, the contract must be approved by the school's governing authority. The school should prepare a resolution for the governing authority president to sign once the contract is approved. This signed resolution must be included in the contract, so it is best to have a separate resolution signed that day rather than having approval reflected in the unapproved, draft minutes.

Once the school's governing authority has approved the contract resolution, the governing authority president must sign and date the contract. Then, the original, signed contract must be sent via postal mail and received by BGSU no later than **May 31st**.

All negotiations must be complete, and the contract must be signed by both parties prior to the expiration of the current contract. The BGSU Provost will only sign the contract once all requirements have been met. BGSU will send a copy of the fully executed contract to the school and the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce. The contract will also be available for reference in Epicenter. The contract will go into effect on **July 1st**.

Step Six: Sponsor Assurances and School Opening

Bowling Green State University must inspect the school and provide assurances it has met all requirements and fulfilled all legal obligations at least ten (10) business days before the school year begins. The school must open by **September 30th**, with exceptions for Dropout Prevention and Recovery Programs. If the school does not open by that deadline, the new contract will become void.