



**Governing Board Capacity/Clarification Interview Rubric
Leadership Preparatory Academy (LPA)
August 3, 2022**

The Petition Review Committee will use the following criteria to rate the governing board capacity/clarification interview. Within each category, specific criteria define the expectations for a response that meets expectations. Reviewers will reach consensus when rating responses by applying the following guidance:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school operates and expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant’s capacity to carry out its plans effectively.
Partially Meets the Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Below the Standard	The response is wholly undeveloped, demonstrates lack of preparation, and/or is unsuited to the mission of the authorizer.
Far Below the Standard	The response is significantly incomplete, raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan and/or the applicant’s ability to carry it out.

Recommendations from the Petition Review Committee will be based on evaluation of the written petition (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and the governing board capacity interview.

Community Support and Need	Standard	Rating
Clarifying Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The petition describes the South DeKalb Community where LPA is located as a “geographically isolated portion of the DeKalb County School District,” describe what type of community partnerships exist in the South DeKalb area and what has the role of the board been in establishing and sustaining these partnerships? P. 11 - At the time of the last renewal, LPA served 434 students. Current enrollment is less than 300 students. What is the Governing Board’s plan for ensuring that the school reaches the expected enrollment of 576 at the end of the charter term? P. 11 - Can the current facility accommodate 576 students? If not, what is the schools’ facility plan? - What challenges did the school encounter in reaching enrollment projections in the current charter term? P.11 	The applicant makes a compelling case for why the school fills an unmet need in the DeKalb County School District. The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the community or communities the school serves or is likely to serve. The Board demonstrates cultural competency specific to the communities with whom it works or seeks to work, including the ability to articulate the root causes of the needs it seeks to fill.	Meets the Standard
		Partially Meets the Standard
		Below the Standard
		Far Below the Standard

Responses from Governing Board:

- Opening Statement – The work at LPA is a labor of love. LPA has a great Board and cohesive focus. The school leaders are doing a wonderful job of driving home the policy. The young people are moving to college, medical school, and law school. LPA has a talented and diverse Board. The Board is excited about where LPA is going.
- Community Engagement - The feedback from parents is central to what we do. This was a factor in the petition to ensure that we are meeting needs. We strive for a cooperative dialogue with our stakeholders. We allow time at our meetings. Awareness is key. We take a cooperative approach.
- Partnerships – Location has been a challenge area. Community service outreach extends beyond the area where we are located. LPA is located in New Birth Church. There are no businesses in the area. The Board tries to be active participants in community partnerships. The Board has been active in bringing people in who can bring expertise and activities to students in the technology space. The school leadership met with the U.S. ambassador to Mozambique at a conference in DC.. This will be an opportunity for students to connect with students outside of their immediate geographic community. The school will continue to develop unique, quality partnerships.
- Enrollment – LPA made an intentional decision prior to the pandemic to take a step-back to look at the quality of the program and the types of teachers the school was able to recruit. The CAO approached the Board to recommend that more attention be given to the culture of the school and look back at the roots of why LPA came into existence. The school has 200 students on the wait list. LPA wants the most effective teachers working in its classrooms. There is a teacher shortage—especially in middle school. The current facility can accommodate the number of students projected in the next charter term (576). LPA has a facility management plan. There are reserved areas in the building that can accommodate up to 550 students. The school is focused on trying to give the best educational experience for students.
- Challenges – There will not be a challenge with increasing enrollment. The length of the charter renewal is a challenge. Bond developers are cautious about proceeding with a 3-year renewal.

Review Committee’s Comments or Concerns:

- Request current facility and community engagement plans. Provide MOUs for existing strategic partnerships.
- Provide more detail on the bond the school is pursuing.
- Specific plan for engaging the larger community was not communicated.
- The location has not changed. However, the school cites location as a challenge to community engagement .
- Per the Board the facility can accommodate 550 students, though the petition includes 576 as the max enrollment for the next charter terms. Provide documentation for the current facilities’ capacity.

School Governance	Standard	Rating
<p>Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What professional expertise does each member bring to the Governing Board? P. 35. How many terms has each member served? – P. 67 - To what extent has the school achieved its mission/vision during the current charter term? What is the evidence that the Governing Board uses to evaluate this goal? P. 11 	<p>The governance structure is designed to (a) put students first, including being responsive to family and community input; (b) achieve the school’s mission and goals; and (c) ensure legal compliance, particularly in terms of proactively preventing financial fraud and</p>	<p>Meets the Standard</p>
		<p>Partially Meets the Standard</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How has the administrative team informed the Board when students (such as those with exceptionalities) have needs for which LPA’s instructional model does not provide sufficient support? What has been the role of the Board in ensuring that these students’ needs are met? 	<p>ensuring the appropriate use of public funds. The governance structure will ensure an active, engaged, knowledgeable Board that has timely, deep, and broad knowledge of the school’s operations, finances, and students’ needs, and operates independently and autonomously.</p>	<p style="background-color: yellow;">Below the Standard</p>
		<p>Far Below the Standard</p>

Responses from Governing Board:

- Board Expertise – auditing/accounting (criminal and investigative) – 4th term; law (civil/criminal defense/federal + 17 years as SPED teacher); speech language pathology, special education; school counseling; education; technology
- Multiple Board members have experience in the field of education and/or working directly with students. The Board is diverse and collaborative.
- The current term, the school focused on leadership. Leadership is included in the connections curriculum. There is a dedicated teacher for the leadership curriculum.
- Students w. Exceptionalities – There is a difference in what goes on at the school house and at the level of the Board. The Board understands the concepts of SWDs, IEPs, etc. The Board relies on the school leadership team to make sure students are served in all capacities. There has never been a time when the school determined that a students’ needs could not be met. The Board meets on a monthly basis. The CAO and CEO review academic issues with graphs and charts. On an annual basis, the Board is informed on how the students are performing on assessments. The school leadership team must ensure that students are served in the least restrictive environment. If student issues arise intermittently, the Board is made aware.

Review Committee’s Comments or Concerns:

- The question about how the Board is informed of the challenges of students with exceptionalities was not fully addressed and will be posed in initial memo.
- Teaching and Learning Framework – Include specific feedback from classroom observations in the final evaluation rubric.
- The Governing Board has broad expertise and diverse backgrounds.
- Clarify whether the LPA Governing Board includes staff members. See SBOE rules.
- One Board member exited the interview at 10:05am.
- Evidence was not provided for what the Board uses to evaluate whether the school is achieving its mission, vision, and goals.
- The Board did not respond to the question about what it is doing specifically to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. Examples of strategies and the role of the Board were not provided in the response. Pose in initial memo.
- The LTSE provided by DCSD is not in the building everyday.

Academic Performance/Plan	Standard	Rating
<p>Clarifying Questions:</p>	<p>The applicant demonstrates the capability to design or select a comprehensive, high-</p>	<p>Meets the Standard</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On page 19 of the petition, research on the connection between project-based learning and academic outcomes is cited. What data is used to assess project-based learning at LPA? What has been the impact of project-based learning on student outcomes? P. 19 - The petition states that LPA’s “Leadership Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Framework integrate technology using blended learning.” Describe how this blended learning model looks, the degree to which Georgia Virtual is used. P. 20 - Describe how you plan to use the educational partnership with Mozambique to expand the Leadership Studies Curriculum. P. 21 - In Spring of 2022 you were cited for a denial of FAPE in a Georgia DOE complaint. How do you monitor your Exceptional Education Students progress in the General Education Setting to ensure that FAPE is provided? 	<p>quality curriculum (standards, resources, methods of instruction, and formative assessments for each core, electives, and mission-specific subjects). The curriculum is inherently inclusive and designed to be responsive to students’ needs; clearly interrelated between its components; and directly aligned to the school’s goals, mission, and educational philosophy.</p>	<p>Partially Meets the Standard</p> <hr/> <p>Below the Standard</p> <hr/> <p>Far Below the Standard</p>
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Responses from Governing Board:

- PBL – Because of the pandemic, the school had to pivot. PBL at LPA is linked to GMAS scores. This year’s scores will serve as a baseline. There were concerns during the last cycle on the connection between the leadership curriculum and student outcomes. The creation of the connections class allows all students to access the leadership curriculum and for implementation of the community service components of the model.
- Assessment of Leadership Curriculum – If people walked into our school, how evident is leadership? Is this an observable metric with students? At the college level, there are degrees in leadership studies. What was emerged was the development of a course and a dedicated leadership studies teacher. Student do community service projects. This year we are fundraising for an organization in Ghana that provides sanitary products to students. This is an example of the school developing world leaders and looking beyond our immediate geographic area for partnership. Community service is a tenet in our leadership curriculum.
- Blended Learning – LPA tried to be on the forefront of technology integration. LPA purchased video conferencing equipment during COVID. The school found self-paced programs that we have been able to integrate over the past two years. Students need more exposure to the curriculum. This year, we have created a more synchronous environment. The school is looking for another platform. Georgia virtual will be used as a supplement. Students will be able to select additional courses to add to their learning plans. Examples – CTAE, foreign language, computer science, etc.
- FAPE – LPA partners with DCSD. There is a dedicated LTSE who supports LPA in ensuring compliance in all areas. The IEP was revised. Compensatory education was extended. This was acknowledged by the state.

Review Committee’s Comments or Concerns:

- Science and social studies classes were offered virtually during the current charter term for grades 6-8. A paraprofessional facilitator was assigned for these courses.
- Provide the leadership curriculum with the response to the initial memo.
- The school does not currently offer a arts program, world languages, or CTAE classes.

Financial Performance/Plan	Standard	Rating
<p>Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Budget Template includes a substantial fund balance. How does LPA strategically allocate funds to accelerate academic performance, as needed? P.32 - Describe the Board’s fundraising strategy, if any. What challenges does the Board anticipate with this strategy? What is the plan for mitigating these challenges? - What have been the results of LPA’s fundraising programs? Did these results meet or exceed the goal(s)? P. 32 - The Budget Template includes \$0 for a contingency fund and no allocation for special education. Please clarify. 	<p>The financial and facilities plans, including the proposed budget, are thoroughly developed and aligned with the proposed school’s mission and education program. The budget is balanced and conservative; reflects all necessary outlays, including any unique programs described in the academic plan; ensures adequate levels on cash on hand, including cash reserves and/or contingencies for unexpected shortfalls; and contains no accounting errors. The revenue projections are realistic and sufficient to meet school expenditures. Both the finance and facilities plans are realistic and informed by accurate assessment, including key funding opportunities and facilities availability.</p>	Meets the Standard
		Partially Meets the Standard
		Below the Standard
		Far Below the Standard
<p>Responses from Governing Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget Process – The school does a needs assessment based on academic performance. What is needed (more technology, resources, etc.)? Each year parents requests additional tutoring. The CAO formulates the priorities for the school as it relates to academic achievement. The goal is to move out of New Birth and to have a building. - The Board operates in prudent fashion. To move into its own space, the Board makes strategic decisions. At the forefront is meeting student needs. - Fundraising – Leadership Prep fundraises only for community support. The founders were clear that the purpose of the school was to educate students. The PTO fundraises for the benefit of students. The students fundraise for the benefit of others. - Earnest Money – LPA has a facility plan. It is important that the school develop its own space and that the space be the appropriate type of space. Under the regulation of the Facilities Grant program, the school has engaged in conversations with New Birth on purchasing a track of land. New Birth owns property (more than 100 acres) from the interstate to Flat Shoals Road. The school has entered into an agreement to purchase property with infrastructure already in place. The school made earnest money deposits for those purposes. - Contingency – The contingencies that we may experience can be handled out of the reserves. If the big picture shows that we need additional funds for special education, there is money available in the reserves. <p>Review Committee’s Comments or Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Review Committee raised concerns about the earnest money paid over multiple years. 		

- The Board referenced conservative spending multiple times. The school has the resources in reserves to support educator development that could move the needle forward. How is the Governing Board strategically allocating resources (including reserves) to accelerate academic achievement?
- What is LPA's contingency budget for if it does not meet its enrollment targets?
- The school has entered into an agreement to purchase property for a future school site. Provide more information/documentation of this agreement with the response to the initial memo. Is the earnest money refundable per the agreement?
- Notes from site visits and classroom observations will be included in the final evaluation rubric.
- Does the school have a capital fundraising campaign/plan?

Organizational Performance/Plan	Standard	Rating
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<p>Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is LPA currently fully staffed for SY 22-23? What is the Governing Board's strategy to increase staff retention and development? - Your CAO serves as the Head of School and the principal. How does the Governing Board plan to support this role and the diversified duties that come with it? 	<p>The organizational plan aligns with and supports the school's mission and educational philosophy, is designed to support the school's goals and academic achievement expectations, and is accurately reflected in the budget. The staffing and recruitment plan provides sufficient academic, non-academic, and mission-critical staff to cover all of the courses and programs described in the Academic Plan. The Board has all areas of knowledge and expertise necessary to operate a successful charter school, and the school leader(s) have or will have the expertise and resources to fulfill the school's mission and goals.</p>	Meets the Standard
		Partially Meets the Standard
		Below the Standard
		Far Below the Standard

Responses from Governing Board:

- Staffing – The school is fully staffed. The school is working collaborative to make sure that the IEPs are implemented. The school works directly with the LTSE to make sure the appropriate training is occurring. The LTSE meets with school leadership weekly.
- CAO – The Board communicates to determine what the needs of the CAO are and what challenges may exist. A boots on the ground approach and comprehensive communication ensures that the CAO can be successful. The CAO and CEO have gone above and beyond in finding grants to ensure that students' needs are met. There are a number of occasions when the school has been able to secure outside support. The job of CAO requires significant input and time. Supplemental support (administrative and clerical) is provided by volunteers through the PTO or some other route. The CAO ensures that students get the top level of services. The staff is cohesive. Staff do tasks beyond their responsibilities to move the ball forward. The CAO informed the Board two-years ago that she was considering retiring. The CAO created a succession plan. The Board wanted to grow their own and for there to be opportunities within the school for teachers to develop leadership. The school created an iLead program for teachers. The LPA academic coaches have gone on to become Assistant Principals in DCSD.

Review Committee’s Comments or Concerns:

- What is the school doing that is unique to try to recruit teachers to the school? What is the school currently doing to support the teachers that they have?
- Counselors in the school are being utilized as teachers for SEL curriculum. For example, a counselor teaches the Leadership Curriculum. Counselors have access to Naviance platform. This platform allows students access to career assessments that can be used for planning for high school. The school currently does not use the platform consistently. Students are not being pre-registered for high school courses.
- How are teachers being empowered and developed to teach leadership to the students? What leadership development PD do the teacher receive?
- What structured support are in place specifically for non-certified teachers?
- School counselors are not consistently attending DCSD trainings due to scheduling conflicts.
- If the counselor is assigned teaching responsibilities during the school day, how does LPA ensure that the services and supports of a school counselor are accessible to students?
- How does the Leadership Curriculum support academic gains?
- How is leadership embedded outside of the elective course offering?
- Provide evidence with the response to the initial memo that the staffing and recruitment plan provides sufficient academic, non-academic, and mission-critical staff to cover all of the courses and programs described in the Academic Plan.
- Response to question about specific support for CAO lacked detail and clarity on a structure or system to support this role.

Performance Task	Standard	Rating
<p>Governing Board Performance Task: In reviewing LPA’s most recent academic performance data, you identify several concerning trends in the data set which need to be addressed (specifically in the data for the following student subgroups— Black males, Hispanic males, students with disabilities, and/or multi-lingual learners).</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Discuss the Governing Board’s process for identifying potential causes for these trends. b. Identify specific board members with primary responsibilities in this scenario. c. Propose potential solutions and next steps. d. What policies and/or procedures influenced your decision-making process? 	<p>The Board demonstrates the capacity to confront potential pitfalls in opening and/or operating a school by identifying the root causes of plausible challenges and solutions to those challenges.</p>	Meets the Standard
		Partially Meets the Standard
		Below the Standard
		Far Below the Standard
<p>Responses from Governing Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAO presented data to Board as she would in a Board meeting. The data is baseline. The Board’s target is for 75% to be developing or above. How do we move the needle for students with disabilities. - The majority of students are Black. The school does not have Hispanic students. - The school will first look at entire population, and then drill down to subgroup. - The school needs data on how close the students were to moving to the next category. - What did the Board learn at the national charter schools conference that we can look at in terms of ELA? 		

- Suggestions for Middle School Level – Incorporate inside the schoolhouse time for students to read their book of choice. Typically the students struggle with reading comprehension. Can we incorporate times of day for students to read and then present to the class on what they are reading? This could be a strategy beyond purchasing a program.
- The school is going back to its 25-year campaign. The school had closed down the literacy room so that students were not sharing books. This year, the school has purchased a set of books for each student. The Board may consider a line item amendment so the students can have a set of books at home and at school. The CAO will talk with teachers about how to carve out time for reading. The school has reading specialists. Do the books on the reading list include young men? Does the school use comic books for young boys (complex characters, graphics, etc.)? Can we partner with local thrift stores to provide Marvel comic books?
- Are there technology issues? Are the students in MTSS? Are interventions being implemented with fidelity? Are lessons on study skills and test taking strategies needed?
- Consider a mentoring program or connect students with college students who can read with the students virtually.
- The school does not need to reinvent the wheel. Keep the main thing the main thing. Tap into graduate and doctoral students who have done research in this area. There are EDD and PhD consortiums with African Americans who have done research in this area.
- Are the students with IEPs meeting their IEP goals? The students may be advancing as it relates to goals but those advances may not be translating to the state tests.
- Next steps – CAO will meet with team to develop a plan for student developing and above to continue to trend up. Board member with interest in comics may be asked to develop an after school program. CAO will do additional data analysis. Counselor will reach out to graduate school programs. Incorporate test-taking strategies in computer classes. Ensure that students have the stamina to read long passages. Do a deep dive. Bring back a comprehensive plan to the Board to ensure that all students are moving forward.

Review Committee's Comments or Concerns:

- The Board defaulted to educators in addressing scenario.
- Sustained silent reading is in alignment with current research. Does the Board have members who push them to think about current academic research?
- When drilling down into subgroups, does the Board have knowledge to make recommendations for teacher support to address needs?
- Part D of the scenario was not addressed.
- It is unclear whether the solutions posed would move the needle for the challenge presented.
- Committee/task force assignments were not made.
- Does the Board have committees?