

# Preliminary Exploration

## Communication and Networking

- Begin building a relationship with the [authorizer](#) to understand process, expectations, and deadlines
- Submit a Letter of Intent to the potential authorizer, as applicable
- Network with other charter schools

## Development and Process

- Identify the vision and mission
- Begin marketing the idea
- Coalesce the steering committee
- Explore pre-startup funding resources
- Verify need and support
- Draft a projected timeline

## Training and Education

- Become familiar with [the League](#), [CDE](#), and the potential [authorizer](#)
- [Required reading list](#)
- Access [start-up documents](#)
- Attend the [CDE Application Training](#)
- [Glossary](#) and [acronyms](#)

Are resources, support, and need sufficient?  
Is the founding group prepared to commit the time and energy required for start-up?

YES

NO

Re-engage in the process of defining support and need for the school  
OR  
Abandon the application

# Step 1: Initial Draft of the Application

## Communication and Networking

- Contact the potential authorizer for procedures and timelines
- Inform and educate prospective parents
- Contact the League for application assistance
- Request a "friendly read and feedback" from network schools and the League
- Contact real estate professionals / Research facility options

## Development and Process

- Assign tasks and develop a work plan for writing the application
- Circulate and edit the draft internally
- Develop a preliminary budget and explore pre-startup funding
- Refer to rubrics and checklists to ensure a comprehensive and complete application

## Training and Education

- Attend workshops and CDE start-up grant training
- Calendar of conferences and trainings
- Research the League's review process
- Research and review legal structure requirements
- Required reading

Do you think you have a strong application?  
Does your "friendly reader" think the same?

YES

NO

Re-engage in the process of editing and refinement  
OR  
Abandon the application

# Step 2: Obtain Assistance/Feedback

## Communication and Networking

- Commit to Quality Standards: NACSA, the League, and CDE
- Contact the League and submit application for review and feedback
- Continue contact with the potential authorizer to verify any pre-review requirements

## Development and Process

- Edit and revise the application based on feedback
- Submit to the League for a second reading and revision
- Submit to the League for a final reading

## Training and Education

- Attend workshops and trainings
- Research and review program structure requirements
- Seek expertise in areas of weakness
- Required reading

Have you developed a complete and comprehensive application package?  
Have you appropriately incorporated feedback?

YES

NO

Re-engage in the process of incorporating feedback to create a complete package  
OR  
Abandon the application

# Step 3: Submit to the Authorizer

## Communication and Networking

- Solidify and mobilize parental and community support
- Initiate contact with legal counsel

## Development and Process

- Prepare for questions, interviews, editing and revisions
- Participate in two public hearings conducted by the authorizer
- Begin writing CDE grant application

## Training and Education

- Review authorizer timelines and process
- Train potential board members through the Colorado board training modules and other training opportunities
- Research standard contracts executed by the authorizer

APPROVED

DENIED

APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

Enter the process of appeal to the State Board of Education  
OR  
Abandon the application

# Step 4: Contract and Negotiations

## Communication and Networking

- Retain legal counsel

## Development and Process

- Solidify facility plans
- Ensure student enrollment
- Plan marketing campaign
- Negotiate contract with the authorizer

## Training and Education

- Plan staff and board training activities for first year

Adopt conditional changes  
OR  
Negotiate conditions  
OR  
Abandon the application

Once a contract is signed with the authorizer, the charter application process is complete.

Next Steps