

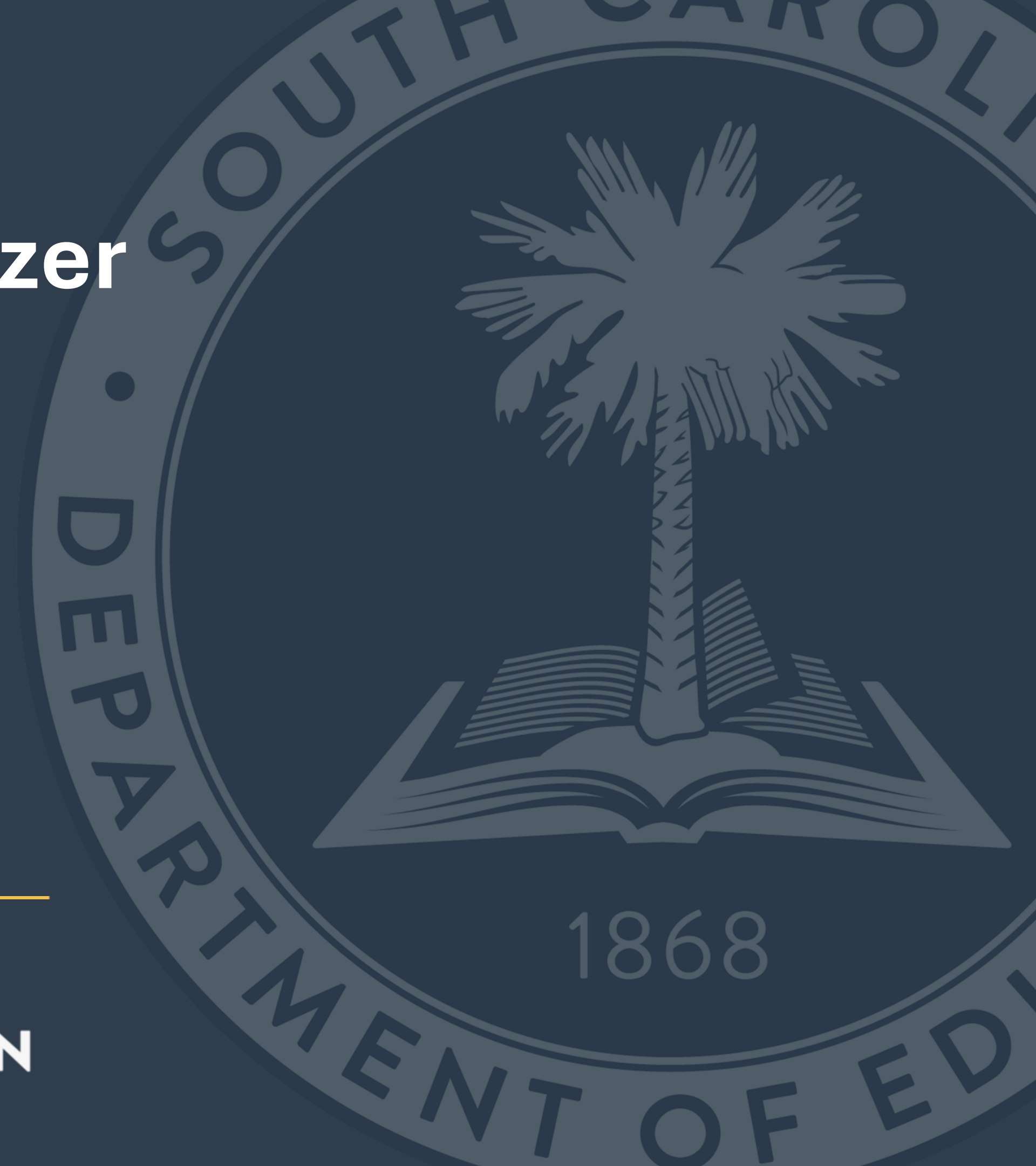
# Local District Authorizer Information Session

1/27/2026

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SOUTH CAROLINA  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



# Agenda

**01 Application Process**

**02 Statement of Assurances**

**03 Q&A**



# Application Process

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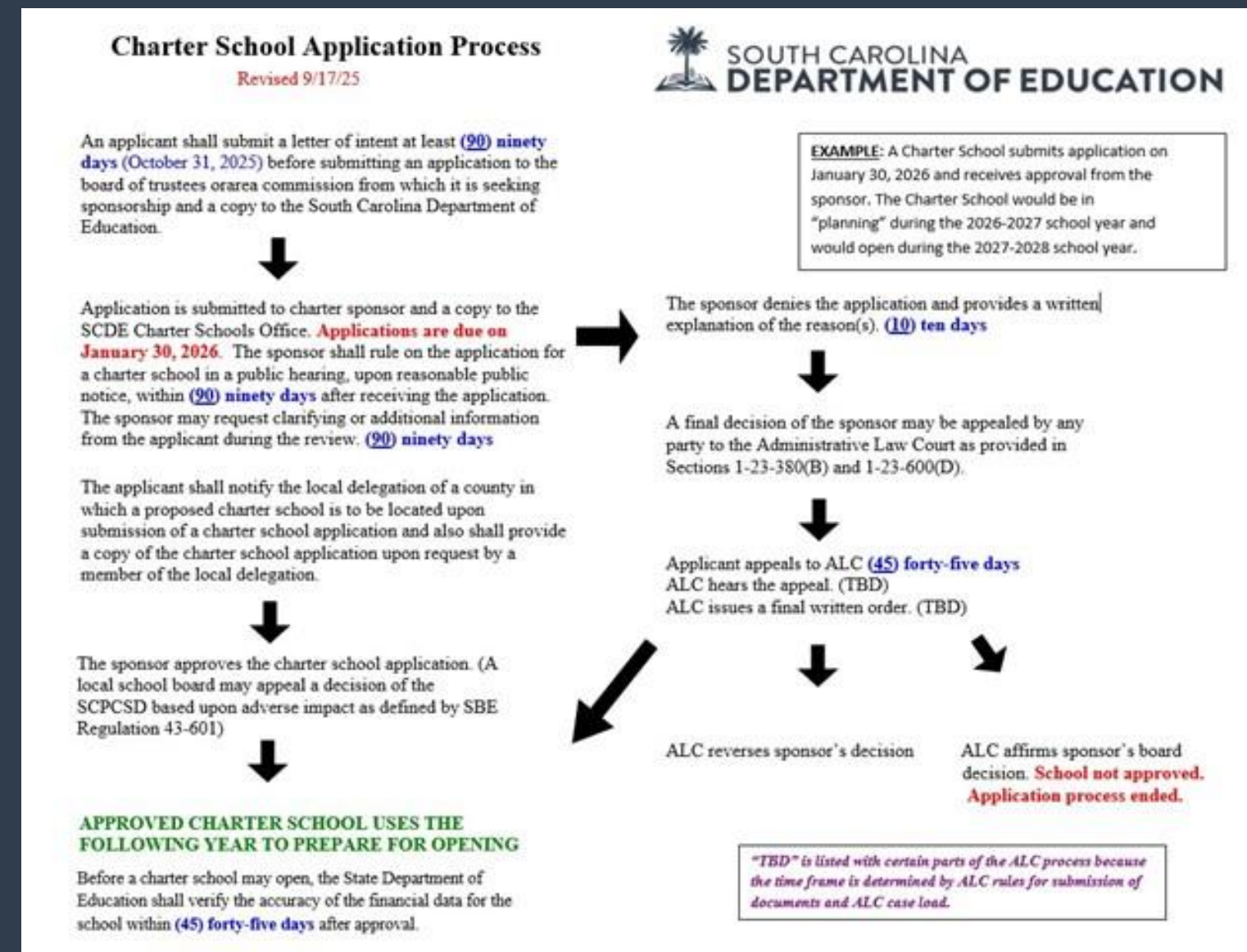
- Applicant shall notify the local delegation of the county which the proposed charter is to be located.
  - Only applications that are **complete** and follow these guidelines will be considered.
  - Applicants may amend applications after submission if the authorizer determines that an application does not meet one or more of the standards and it may request clarifying information from the applicant prior to or during the hearing. The authorizer has the authority to incorporate this clarifying information into the application.
- Within 90 days of receiving a completed application, the sponsor will review and rule on the application in a public hearing.
    - If there is no ruling within 90 days, the application is considered approved.
  - Once approved, the charter school will coordinate with the sponsor on meeting any determined pre-opening conditions



# Application Process

- An authorizer shall deny an application only if the application:
  - Does not meet the requirements specified in 59-40-50 or 59-40-60
  - Fails to meet the spirit and intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1996
  - Adversely affects the other students in the district in which the charter school is to be located
  - Fails to demonstrate a substantial capacity to establish a viable school

- Within 10 days, a written explanation of the reasons for denial must be sent to the charter committee and filed with the SCDE



# Application Process

- Charter School Application Evaluation Rubric:
  - Reviewers should score each section based on the evidence found in the application
  - Reviewers should indicate areas of strength, areas of weakness, and evidence that may be used to support the assigned rating
  - Evidence should be as factual and objective as possible

| Rating                       | Definition  |
|------------------------------|---|
| Meets the Standard           | <i>The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information, presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate, and the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.</i> |
| Partially Meets the Standard | <i>The response meets the criteria in many respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.</i>  |
| Does Not Meet the Standard   | <i>The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps in several areas.</i>  |
| Falls Far Below the Standard | <i>The response is undeveloped, or significantly incomplete, or otherwise raises concerns about the sustainability of the plan or the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.</i>   |



# Application Process

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- Most Authorizers also conduct a capacity interview with applicants
- Capacity interviews are normally face-to-face meetings with the charter committee, school leader (if hired), EMO/CMO (if committee is working with one), finance lead (if identified)
- Opportunity for Authorizer to assess viability of school proposal (board capacity, financial viability, organizational capacity, etc.)



# Statement of Assurances for Charter School Authorizers

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The Assurances can be found [here](#), on the Charter School Annual Report page

- The authorizer serves as the LEA and retains responsibility for Special Education
- Provide oversight of the school in accordance with the Charter School Act and national industry standards
- Collect an annual report from its school each year and submit the report to the SCDE
- Provide information to general public about charter school as an enrollment option
- Negotiate, execute, and monitor terms of contract with charter school
- Comply with Charter School Act on application hearing, approval, and appeals process
- Notify and take appropriate corrective actions of performance or legal compliance issues with the charter school
- Develop a closure protocol for their charter school. Close any charter school at the end of the school year after receiving the lowest performance level rating for three consecutive years
- Receive and distribute federal, state, county, and school district funds to the charter school
- Provide technical assistance to groups preparing or revising charter applications at no expense
- Provide right of first refusal for any building surplus for sale or lease to a charter committee operating or applying within the district



# Q & A

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Questions?

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