

ExcelinEd CMO expansion survey - Sept 2015

Q1 Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey, which includes questions about how Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) decide to expand into new states or regions. The survey will be used to inform a report published by the Foundation for Excellence in Education (“ExcelinEd”) and the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (NAPCS). This report will share the priorities that CMOs consider when deciding whether to open new public charter schools in a new state or region. We encourage you to be candid with your responses and to provide comments that explain your ratings and choices. All survey responses will be kept anonymous unless you choose to provide follow up contact information at the end of the survey. To express our gratitude for your participation, all participants who provide contact information will receive a summary of survey responses. Note that we use the word “organization” throughout the survey rather than “CMO” or “network” given the range of governance structures used by CMOs and related entities to operate schools. When we say “organization”, we mean the CMO, network of schools, or related management organization with the responsibility and authority to determine when and how to open new schools under a given CMO “brand” name.

Q2 To help us better understand your responses, please answer the following descriptive general questions about the current state of your organization.

Q3 How would you describe your role at your organization?

- ☐ Executive Director or CEO
- ☐ Functional Lead in charge of expansion (e.g., Chief Growth Officer or Expansion Project Manager)
- ☐ Other (please provide your title) _____

Q4 Approximately how many students are currently enrolled in all of the schools operated by your organization?

Q5 How many students will be enrolled in schools operated by your organization at conclusion of currently planned growth?

Q6 How many campuses does your organization operate?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2-3
- ☐ 4-9
- ☐ 10-19
- ☐ More than 20

Q7 In how many states does your organization operate?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 or more

Q8 In what geographic region of the country does your organization operate its schools?(please select all that apply)

- ☐ Northeast (NY, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, ME)
- ☐ Mid-Atlantic (PA, NJ, DE, MD, DC, VA)
- ☐ South (NC, SC, GA, FL, WV, KY, TN, AL, MS, AR, LA, OK, TX)
- ☐ Midwest (OH, MI, IN, IL, WI, MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS)
- ☐ West (WA, OR, CA, NV, ID, MT, WY, UT, AZ, CO, NM, HI, AK)

Q9 If you consider all sources of public revenue (state per-pupil funding, title and other federal funding, categorical aids (transportation, library services, pre-K, etc.)), and any local funding available, what is the base-level annual per-pupil public funding your organization receives across its current schools? (please provide approximate maximum and minimum values across all schools)

Minimum amount (\$)

Maximum amount (\$)

Q10 The next section of the survey asks questions about your organization's plans to broaden and/or deepen impact over time and the conditions you seek to accomplish your impact goals.

Q11 Does your organization plan to broaden and/or deepen its impact over time? If so, how?
(check all that apply)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Increase overall student enrollment at existing schools
- ☐ Improve student outcomes at existing schools
- ☐ Open new schools
- ☐ Disseminate our practices to other educators through... [please explain]

- ☐ Other [please explain] _____

Q12 Is your organization currently planning to expand to operate schools in a new state in which your schools do not currently enroll students?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Q13 Is your organization willing to expand to a new state within the next...

- ☐ year?
- ☐ three years?
- ☐ five years?
- ☐ ten years?
- ☐ NA (we do not anticipate being willing to expand to a new state)

Q14 Do you have a specific growth target for the number of schools in your organization's portfolio within the next five years?

- ☐ Yes (please enter total number of new schools) _____
- ☐ No, and we don't intend to develop a target
- ☐ No, but we are in the process of developing a target

Q16 Which statement best describes your organization's approach to growth?

- ☐ We seek to grow at a measured pace and only if conditions are right.
- ☐ We seek to grow at a moderate pace and are flexible about many growth conditions.
- ☐ We seek to grow at a rapid pace and flexible about all growth conditions.
- ☐ We do not have plans to grow in the foreseeable future, but would consider expanding if the right opportunity presented itself.
- ☐ We do not intend to grow.
- ☐ Other (please describe) _____

Q15 Under what pace/staffing conditions would you be willing to open a school in a new region?(select all that apply)

- ☐ Slow or self-determined pace of opening/enrollment (i.e., grade-by-grade startup)
- ☐ Accelerated pace of opening/enrollment (i.e., multiple grades per year startup)
- ☐ Full enrollment startup (i.e. starting with all grades)
- ☐ Takeover of an existing underperforming charter school
- ☐ Takeover of an existing under performing private school (e.g., a Catholic School)
- ☐ Takeover of an existing underperforming public school (with full human capital autonomy)
- ☐ Takeover of an existing underperforming public school (with requirement to retain existing staff)

Q17 What is the farthest away from your organization's headquarters or home region you would be willing to open schools?

- ☐ Would not consider going outside our current region
- ☐ 100-300 miles (within the same state or an adjacent state)
- ☐ 301-1000 miles (within the same broad geographic region of the US)
- ☐ Nationwide (distance is not a constraint)
- ☐ Not applicable

Q18 How important is it to your organization that the demographic composition (family SES, ethnicity, population density, ELL status) of a new school's student body be similar to that of your organization's existing schools?

- ☐ Not at all Important
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Neither Important nor Unimportant
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Extremely Important

Q19 In the next section of the survey, we ask questions about your organization's perspective on resources (funding, facilities, and transportation support) needed to open schools in a new state.

Q20 If you consider all sources of public revenue (state per-pupil funding, title and other federal funding, categorical aids (transportation, library services, pre-K, etc.)), and any local funding available, what is the base-level annual per-pupil public funding your network requires to operate effectively?

_____ Minimum public \$ per student (\$k)

Q21 If given the choice, which would you most prefer to help your organization to manage facilities costs?

- ☐ Increased per-pupil funding to offset facility costs
- ☐ Access to a low- or no-cost school facility
- ☐ Unsure

Q22 Does your organization have a preference around how facilities aid is delivered?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes; preference for loan funding to purchase a private facility
- ☐ Yes; preference for an existing school building provided by the local district
- ☐ Yes; preference for a per-pupil facilities allocation
- ☐ Yes; other preference [please explain] _____

Q23 Please share any other comments on your organization's requirements or preferences for facilities support.

Q24 Does your CMO provide transportation in any of your current regions?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Answer If Does your CMO provide transportation in any of your current regions? No Is Selected

Q25 Would your CMO consider expanding to a new region that required transportation?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes; but only if there is a per-pupil allocation for transportation
- ☐ Yes

Q26 In the next section of the survey, we ask questions about your organization's perspective on human capital policies and supports needed to open schools in a new state.

Q27 What are the three most important human capital assets and resources your organization evaluates when considering a new geography?(please rank order your top three choices)

- _____ Existing veteran teacher pool from district public schools
- _____ Existing veteran teachers from local private schools
- _____ Partnership with a local university or school of education
- _____ Local Teach For America corps members
- _____ Local Teach For America alumni
- _____ Teachers from other alternative certification programs
- _____ Other 1
- _____ Other 2

Q28 Would your organization consider opening schools in a geography that requires participation in state or local collective bargaining agreements?

- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Yes, my organization would consider opening schools in a geography that requires collective bargaining
- ☐ No, my organization would not consider opening schools in a geography that requires collective bargaining

Answer If What is your CMO's position on collective bargaining by school employees?(Select all that apply) Would consider opening schools in a geography that requires collective bargaining Is Selected

Q29 Would your organization consider opening schools in a geography where there is active organizing among charter teachers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Q30 What additional information can you share about your organization's position on collective bargaining?

Q31 What additional information can you tell us about your organization's human capital requirements for entering a new region?

Q32 In the next section of the survey, we ask questions about your organization's perspective on charter authorization and governance-related policies needed to open schools in a new state.

Q33 What is the current local educational agency (LEA) status of your schools and organization, as chartered?

- ☐ Each school campus within our network is an LEA
- ☐ We have multiple LEAs within our network of schools
- ☐ Each geographic region (city or state) of our CMO is its own LEA
- ☐ Our entire organization functions as a single LEA

Q34 What is your organization's preference on local educational agency (LEA) status within a new geography?

- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Prefer to open schools in a geography that requires CMOs to form their own LEA
- ☐ Prefer to open schools in a geography that requires CMOs join an existing LEA
- ☐ Prefer to open schools in a geography that allows CMOs to choose whether to form their own LEA or join an existing one

Q35 If your organization's preferred LEA structure is not available in a given market, would your organization consider that a non-negotiable?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Q36 Does your organization prefer that a single governing board governs the entire network?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No preference
- ☐ Unsure

Q37 If your organization forms a local/regional governing board, do you prefer that this single board governs all of your schools in that region?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No preference
- ☐ Unsure

Q38 Does your organization have a preference for the type of authorizer options available in a new region?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please explain) _____

Q39 Please rank the top three types of local outreach your organization would prioritize in a new community.

- _____ Engage with local elected officials
- _____ Engage with local community leaders (e.g., clergy)
- _____ Engage directly with community members (including potential families) in public meetings
- _____ Engage directly with community members (including potential families) in private or small-group meetings
- _____ Engage with local funders
- _____ Engage with potential partners
- _____ Engage with the business community
- _____ Other 1
- _____ Other 2

Q40 Is there anything else you would like to share about your organization's approach to opening schools?

Q41 Policy factors may be important to an organization's expansion plans, yet may vary across regions or states. Please consider the following factors and indicate the degree to which they would influence your organization's expansion plans.

Q42 Autonomy

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single-handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
Freedom to establish length and duration of school day and year (above a minimum threshold)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to determine appropriate staff to student ratios for teachers and administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to hire, evaluate, train, fire, and promote teachers and leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to determine teacher and leader compensation and benefit packages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to determine teacher and leader benefit packages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to independently manage budget and spending	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to choose and change curriculum materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to choose and schedule formative assessments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to opt-out of state/local teacher pension system or retirement plan (and choose an appropriate plan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Freedom to determine appropriate governing board size and composition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Freedom to set an appropriate school culture (including discipline system)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q43 Certification Requirements

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single-handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
Flexible certification requirements for teachers in schools (including no certification or alternative certification)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible certification requirements for leaders in schools (including no certification or alternative certification)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q44 Funding and facilities

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single- handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
Equitable funding for students in charter schools (when compared with funding for students in traditional public schools)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding that flows from the state directly to the charter school (vs. having funds pass through the school district)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government assistance for facilities access/use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start-up funds are available in the state—from federal, state, or private sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q45 Authorizing and Growth

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single- handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
Non-district charter authorizer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No legislative caps on the total number of charter seats available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A clear path for expansion and replication within the region so that a CMO can open more than a single campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authorizer has authority to approve multiple charters up front (on a performance-based contract) so that a CMO does not have to reapply for charters if performance is strong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High performing CMOs are given preference/opportunities over low-performing CMOs for expansion and replication purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
State law provides for the automatic closure of chronically low-performing charters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boards are allowed to hold multiple charters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students enrolled in your elementary/middle schools receive a guaranteed slot in a middle/high school operated by your organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q46 Standards and Accountability

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single-handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
The state has a stable set of learning standards (i.e., not undergoing review/revision)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) by the state	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The state has a stable accountability/assessment system (i.e., not undergoing review/revision)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q47 Non-policy factors may also be important to an organization's expansion plans, yet may also vary across regions or states. Please consider the following factors and indicate the degree to which they would influence your organization's expansion plans.

Q48 Political considerations

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single- handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
There is support for charter schools from state political leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is support for charter schools from local political leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is support for charter schools from local and state business leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is support for charter schools from community leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charter schools are portrayed by the local press as positive or neutral.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a strong state charter support organization or other organization that provides advocacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q49 Human capital

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single- handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
There is a pipeline for hiring high-quality teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a pipeline for hiring high-quality leaders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a high "livability factor" for the region, i.e., it is a desirable place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The cost-of-living is consistent with expected salaries for charter school staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leaders are not required to be immediately licensed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers are not required to be immediately licensed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q50 Capacity to serve students

	Must have: Essential factors that would preclude expansion if not present	Nice-to-have: Important factors that would influence expansion decisions, but not single- handedly derail them.	Not important: Factors that do not influence your organization's expansion decisions
A history of overall charter performance success in the state/region	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A large student population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A growing student population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A specific demographic make- up of the state's student population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A specific demographic make- up of regional/local (within the state) student populations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of or limited current charter and private school market penetration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor student performance within current educational options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adequate donor capacity within the region	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to other schools in the network	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feasibility of opening schools in urban setting(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feasibility of opening schools in suburban setting(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feasibility of opening schools in rural	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

setting(s)			
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Q51 Thank you for your responses. If you would like to discuss your answers or provide further information by phone, please provide your contact information below. Note that this contact information is linked with your response; your survey data will no longer be anonymous to our research team but will absolutely remain confidential for any and all reporting purposes.

Name:

Organization:

Email:

Phone:

Q52 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. After you click the ">" button below, your answers will be submitted. You will then be directed to a separate form to enter your email address if you wish to receive a summary of survey findings. Note that this email will not be linked to your response data. We hope that you will enjoy this summary as an additional "thank you" for providing input today.