With the passage of Act 2015-3, local school systems and their communities will have another tool to create innovative options to serve the needs of their students. As our Department and the Alabama State Board of Education move forward with the development of guidelines for implementation, our focus will be on the same three criteria we would apply to any new option or program affecting public education:

1. Meeting the needs of students that are currently unmet through existing public school options and internal innovative programs/choices—another option for innovation.
2. Ensuring that the decision to create a public charter school originates at the local level based on the needs of its students and with broad community support.
3. Working to ensure that there is no negative financial impact on an existing school or school system as a result of the creation of a start-up or conversion public charter school since the state’s Foundation Program for public schools still remains only partially funded.