

**Florida Schools of Excellence Commission  
Co-Sponsor Application  
Form FSEC-1**

**OVERVIEW OF THE CO-SPONSOR APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS  
AND TIMELINE**

The Florida Schools of Excellence Commission (FSE) is committed to approving only applicants that meet the high standards it has set for charter school co-sponsorship. The Commission has charged the FSE Executive Director with implementing a rigorous co-sponsorship application process and recommending for co-sponsorship only applicants that meet the stated standards. The Commission, both as individual members and collectively, will remain objective throughout the application process and act responsibly on the recommendations for co-sponsorship as provided by the FSE Executive Director.

The following describes both the process and timeline by which the Commission will make its co-sponsorship decisions.

**APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS**

The Florida Schools of Excellence Commission will use a multi-stage process to evaluate applications for charter school co-sponsorship. The process is rigorous and thereby enables the Commission to thoroughly evaluate the following criteria, all in furtherance of the information required in section 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes:

- The applicant's commitment to quality academic outcomes, responsible governance, fiscal and regulatory accountability under an oversight structure that values school autonomy;
- The quality of the applicant's plan for charter school co-sponsorship, and
- The capacity of the applicant to implement those plans.

The following describes each phase in the evaluation process.

**STEP 1: WRITTEN APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO FLORIDA SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE COMMISSION**

Applicant groups seeking co-sponsorship status must submit to the Commission a written application that responds to each request for information as stated in the *Florida Schools of Excellence Co-Sponsor Application*.

The Commission will begin accepting written applications on January 31, 2006 and applications must be received by **4:00 EST on March 1, 2007** to be considered during this application evaluation cycle. The Commission will not accept any applications submitted after the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, rather the applicant group will have to apply in a future application cycle for co-sponsorship consideration.

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The Commission will act on all applications received within 90 days of the application deadline (e.g. Steps 2 – 5 will take place no later than May 1, 2007), unless the 90-day period is waived by the applicant.

**STEP 2: WRITTEN APPLICATION EVALUATION**

Each application will be reviewed by FSE staff and other organizations and financial experts as necessary.

Each reviewer will evaluate the written application against standards as defined in the *Co-Sponsor Application Evaluation Instrument*. Reviewers will assess the degree to which the responses to each information requirement meet the stated criteria.

In evaluating the written application, reviewers will identify questions and deficiencies in the written application. These issues will serve as the basis of inquiry for the applicant interviews.

**STEP 3: APPLICANT INTERVIEW**

FSE staff will hold interviews with all applicants. The purpose of the interview is to:

- Assess overall capacity of the applicant to serve as a quality co-sponsor;
- Clarify any components of the written application for which reviewers had questions or require additional information to fully evaluate, and
- Corroborate information provided in the written application.

Each interviewer will evaluate the information gathered through the applicant interview against the standards defined in the *Co-Sponsor Application Evaluation Tool* and analyze, based on their assessment of the interview and written application, whether the applicant should be recommended for co-sponsorship and make a recommendation to approve or deny an application. Only applicants that have presented a quality application for co-sponsorship with no material weaknesses and have demonstrated the capacity to effectively fulfill co-sponsorship responsibilities should be recommended for co-sponsorship.

**STEP 4: RECOMMENDATIONS TO FLORIDA SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE COMMISSION**

The FSE Executive Director will determine, based on the information gathered and recommendations made by reviewers and interviewers throughout the application evaluation process, whether an applicant has met the standard for co-sponsorship. The applicant will be allowed to give a presentation to the Commission prior to the final vote. The FSE Executive Director will make recommendations to the Commission on whether to grant or deny co-sponsorship status. The Commission will then approve or deny the application.

**STEP 5: COMMISSION APPROVAL OF CO-SPONSORS**

The Commission will receive and vote on co-sponsorship application taking into consideration the recommendation by the FSE's Executive Director. The Commission will only approve applicants for co-sponsorship that meet the standards of the application process. An application cannot have significant weaknesses in any component of the application and still be judged to have met the standards, suitable for approval.

An applicant that is denied co-sponsorship status shall have the right to appeal the Commission's decision to the State Board of Education pursuant to section 1002.33(6), Florida Statutes.

An applicant that is approved shall be considered to have "conditional approval" to serve as a co-sponsor of charter schools. A conditionally-approved co-sponsor shall have no authority to approve a charter school(s) and assume sponsorship duties until it has executed a co-sponsorship agreement with the Commission.

**STEP 6: CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN CO-SPONSOR AND FLORIDA SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE COMMISSION**

Upon conditional approval of co-sponsorship status, the applicant and the Commission shall enter into an co-sponsor agreement pursuant to the timeframes set forth in section 1002.33(6)(i), Florida statutes. Only after a co-sponsor agreement has been executed shall the applicant have final approval and thereby be authorized to assume co-sponsor duties and functions.

**APPLICATION EVALUATION TIMELINE**

As described above, the Commission will implement a multi-stage process in evaluating applications for charter school co-sponsorship. The following presents an estimated timeline. It is important to note that the Commission has 90 days to complete its evaluation of applications received by March 1, 2007. And while the following presents the proposed timeline by which the stages in the application process will take place, please note that specific dates are subject to change in order to effectively act on all applications no later than May 31, 2007. That said, the following timeline should give applicants a good understanding of what to expect in terms of important dates in the application evaluation process.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Commission Begins to Accept Co-Sponsor Applications	January 31, 2007
Deadline for Submission of Co-Sponsor Application	March 1, 2007
Reviewers Complete Written Application Evaluation	April 15, 2007
Co-Sponsor Applicant Interviews	April 25 - 29, 2007

Recommendations to the Commission  
Are Made

May 6, 2007

Commission Approves Co-Sponsors

No later than  
May 31, 2007

Commission Enters into Contracts  
With Co-Sponsors

September 31, 2007

Co-Sponsors Release Application for  
New Charter Schools

October 31, 2007

Co-Sponsors Approve New Charter  
Schools

January 31, 2008

New Schools Open

Fall 2008

**Florida Schools of Excellence Commission  
Co-Sponsor Application  
Form FSEC-1**

**Introduction**

Municipalities, community colleges, state universities and regional educational consortia may now approve, oversee and evaluate public schools across the state as a cosponsor of charter schools approved by the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission. This written cosponsor application is structured to elicit applicants' commitment to quality academic outcomes, responsible governance, fiscal, and regulatory accountability under an oversight structure that values school autonomy.

As identified in section 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes, the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission must find the applicant, prior to entering into a cosponsor agreement:

1. Has the necessary staff and infrastructure or has established the necessary contractual or interagency relationships to ensure its ability to handle all of the administrative responsibilities required of a charter school sponsor as set forth in subsection 1002.33(20), Florida Statutes;
2. Has the necessary staff expertise and infrastructure or has established the necessary contractual or interagency relationships to ensure that it will approve and is able to develop and maintain charter schools of the highest academic quality;
3. Is able to provide the necessary public and private financial resources and staff to ensure that it can monitor and support charter schools that are economically efficient and fiscally sound;
4. Is committed to providing equal access to all students and to maintaining a diverse student population within its charter schools, including compliance with all applicable requirements of federal law;
5. Is committed to serving low-income, low-performing, gifted, or underserved student populations;
6. Has articulated annual academic and financial goals and expected outcomes for its charter schools as well as the methods and plans by which it will measure and achieve those goals and outcomes;
7. Has policies in place to protect its cosponsoring practices from conflicts of interest.

The Commission's written application and review process is designed to ensure applicants demonstrate evidence in each required category. Any questions about this application or the process of becoming a cosponsor should be directed to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.

**Becoming A  
Florida Schools of Excellence Commission  
Charter School Cosponsor**

**Cosponsor Application and Approval Process**

The Florida Schools of Excellence Commission's Cosponsor Application Process occurs in three stages; written application, interviews, and contracting. Beginning in 2007, and for each subsequent year, the Commission will accept written cosponsor applications from January 31 until March 1.

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission for compliance with, the provisions of subsection 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes. Applications will also be reviewed and evaluated by the Commission for compliance with sections 1002.335 and 1002.33, Florida Statutes, as well as this application, all in furtherance of the evidence required in section 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes. Commission members will seek input from its staff, and other organizations and financial experts, as necessary.

FSEC staff will hold interviews with all applicants. Interviews will occur within 60 days of receipt of the application. As required by section 1002.335(6)(a), denial or approval of cosponsor applications will occur within 90 days of receipt of the application, unless this period is waived by the applicant. Applicants will be notified of the Commission's decision in writing.

Upon approval of an application, the Commission will work with successful applicants to execute the contractual agreement as provided in section 1002.335(7), Florida Statutes.

**Written Application Guidance**

1. This application document includes the outline of responses required for a complete submission to apply to become a cosponsor of Florida's charter schools. Each request for required information is located inside a box. Below the box may be any additional information or guidance regarding that request. In some instances no additional information is required and therefore not included.
2. The terms "applicant cosponsor" and "applicant" used in this document refer to the municipality, state university, community college or regional educational consortia identified in section 1002.335, Florida Statutes, as eligible cosponsors.
3. The application transmittal cover page and the capacity and infrastructure sections of this application require the applicant organization name, the lead applicant name and the name of a contact person. The applicant organization name you provide shall be the municipality, state university,

community college or regional educational consortia applying for cosponsor status.

As the application must have the explicit support of a university, city, community college or consortia, the lead applicant name provided shall be the head of that organization or the person within that organization vested with the responsibility to implement cosponsor duties. If the individual identified as the lead applicant is not the person best positioned to answer application submission questions, the transmittal cover page should include a request for a contact person to assist with these issues.

4. The written application serves the important purpose of providing the information necessary for the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission to determine if the applicant fulfills the requirements to become a cosponsor of Florida's charter schools. As importantly, the application must cogently demonstrate the knowledge, capacity and skill required to effectively grant, monitor and evaluate charter schools that promote increased academic achievement for Florida's students.

The Florida Schools of Excellence Commission encourages applicants to design and propose cosponsor initiatives that are grounded in research on effective educational administration, oversight and governance practices and to demonstrate this research base in application responses. While the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission is interested in proposed practices grounded in research, applicants must also clearly communicate how such research will translate into realistic and effective operations and oversight. Applicants are also encouraged to evaluate their responses to make sure that they are jargon free and identify specific plans for charter school oversight. Successful applications will detail cosponsor plans that are reasonable, feasible and attainable.

5. The application asks about the applicant's plans for providing technical assistance to the charter schools it sponsors. Applicants should describe how they can best support high quality school outcomes while respecting charter school autonomy.
6. The information provided in the application must comply with section 1002.335, Florida Statutes.

**Application Format & Submission**

1. Submit ten bound copies of the application and one unbound copy suitable for photo copying. Each paper copy must include an original signature from the individual serving as the organization's lead applicant. Also provide two electronic copies one in PDF format and one in Microsoft Word/Excel format.

Submit all required materials to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.

2. All written submissions must be prepared on plain, 8 ½ x 11" size paper that is suitable for reproduction. *Specific, clear and jargon free submissions are strongly encouraged.* Submissions must be formatted with the following guidelines:

- one-inch margins;
- 11-point font, or larger;
- a transmittal page as the cover sheet to your application;
- a Table of Contents as specified below that includes attachments, and;
- page numbers in the bottom right hand corner of each page, including attachments.

3. Organize your application in the same order as the requests are presented in this document. In doing so, the table of contents and section titles in your application should be as follows:

**I. Executive Summary**

**II. Commitment to Quality**

- A. Mission
- B. Goals

**III. Cosponsoring Focus**

**IV. Capacity & Infrastructure**

- A. Organizational Structures
- B. Policies & Procedures
- C. Human Resources
  1. Leadership & Administration
  2. Skills & Expertise
- D. Financial Resources

**V. Cosponsor Charter School Application & Renewal**

**VI. Ongoing Oversight & Evaluation**

- A. Academic Oversight
- B. Governance Oversight
- C. Fiscal & Regulatory Oversight

**VII. (Additional material the applicant wishes to include in the body of the application)**

**VIII. Action Plan**

**IX. Attachments**

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**Florida Schools of Excellence Commission  
Cosponsor Application  
Transmittal Cover Sheet**

Name of Cosponsor Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Applicant (check one)

- Community College
- Municipality
- Regional Education Consortia
- State University

Lead Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Print or type name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

**APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Facsimile: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Area or Region of Florida in which the applicant hopes to charter schools: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Requested Number of Charter(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE FLORIDA  
SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE COMMISSION**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. **Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary shall provide an overview of the applicant's expertise, proposed authorizing policies, procedures and capacities to judge the worthiness of charter school applicants, grant charters, monitor school effectiveness and report on the schools it oversees. The Executive Summary shall include a brief but precise description of the following application elements:

- the reason(s) and rationale behind the proposed cosponsor's interest in becoming a cosponsor of charter schools with the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission;
- how the applicant will promote autonomy and innovation of the charter schools it may authorize while at the same time holding them accountable for the academic, fiscal and regulatory requirements for charter schools consistent with the state education goals established by section 1000.03(5) Florida Statute;
- how the applicant will structure its work to improve student learning and achievement;
- how the applicant will oversee and promote fiscal soundness in charter schools it may authorize;
- the specific measures the applicant proposes to use in determining the success and effectiveness of the school, and;
- how the proposed cosponsor will implement cosponsor duties to meet the statutory purposes of section 1002.335, Florida Statute.

### Guidance:

The Executive Summary shall be no more than two to three pages in length and should present the compelling vision for the cosponsor applicant's reasons for hoping to charter schools to serve Florida's children. The summary shall provide an overview of the needs of the students the applicant hopes to serve and how the cosponsor will ensure its charter schools meet those needs. The summary shall also provide an overview of the authorizing design the applicant will create and any best practice or research base that supports that design.

**II. Commitment to Quality****A. Mission**

Describe how the cosponsor applicant's mission or organizational purpose aligns with cosponsoring charter schools for the purpose of providing the highest level of public education to low-income, low-performing, gifted or underserved student populations. Include the following information:

- why the cosponsor applicant is interested in serving Florida's children as a cosponsor of charter schools;
- how the applicant organization demonstrates an educational orientation or operation that fosters education;
- a brief history of the organization;
- a data driven description of activities and/or accomplishments of the organization to illuminate the organizational capacity to become a quality authorizer of Florida charter schools, and;
- experience(s) with charter schools to date.

**Guidance:**

Responses to this section require more than simply stating an organizational mission and must clearly define why becoming a cosponsor of charter schools aligns with the broader goals of the applicant. Applicants shall describe student needs they hope to address through high quality charter school sponsoring and the basis for believing the applicant can succeed in providing the highest level of public education to low income, low performing, gifted and underserved students. Applicants may choose to craft a mission statement specific to cosponsoring duties. The applicant's mission statement shall define the purpose and goals of becoming a charter school cosponsor within the larger context of the applicant entity's mission.

## II. Commitment to Quality (continued)

### B. Goals

Identify a list of measurable and attainable goals for the proposed work as a cosponsor of charter schools with the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission. These goals shall identify clear outcomes by which the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission may assess a successful applicant's authorizing practices and must link to increasing student academic achievement.

#### Guidance:

As set forth subsection 1002.335(4)(b), Florida Statutes, cosponsors must annually appear before the Commission to report on the status of their work and the schools they charter. In addition, the law requires the Commission to report annually on the performance of cosponsors.

The contractual agreement between the cosponsor and the Commission will outline specific goals the cosponsor will be required to report on annually. Florida law requires cosponsors to articulate annual academic and fiscal goals and expected outcomes for its charter schools, as well as the methods and plans by which it will measure and achieve those goals and outcomes. Use this section of your application to propose goals central to becoming a successful charter school cosponsor.

The Commission anticipates two sets of goals. The first set shall link directly to student academic results as measured by state assessments. They shall also include fiscal, regulatory and governance goals by which the applicant may measure the success of the charter schools it sponsors. Applicants may also include additional achievement measures designed to capture success in schools that serve exceptional student populations. In crafting these goals, consider the evidence required to demonstrate successful progress toward or attainment of such goals.

Sample goals linked to school performance can include, but are not limited to:

- *85% of schools chartered by (applicant organization) will provide an academic program that results in each school meeting 85% of its academic goals over the term of its charter.*
- *All schools chartered by (applicant organization) will meet all regulatory and fiscal requirements ascribed to charter schools in the state of Florida.*
- *All schools chartered by (applicant organization) will demonstrate good governance by adhering to the state's sunshine laws, FERPA requirements, student health and welfare requirements as well as participating annually in board governance training.*

The second set of proposed goals shall identify how the Commission will measure the applicant's success based on the administrative and financial support provided to the cosponsor's charter schools.

Sample goals can include, but are not limited to:

- *All schools chartered by (applicant organization) will receive data analysis training and reporting assistance that results in accurate and timely reports on student progress to parents, the public, the cosponsor and the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.*
- *Surveys of participants in (applicant organization)'s annual Charter school governing board training provided by (applicant organization) will result in a 90% of respondents judging the training to be informative, of high quality and directly in line with their duties.*
- *(Applicant organization) will demonstrate effective and efficient financial stewardship through the delivery of on time annual audit findings that are positive and without material weaknesses.*

**III. Cosponsoring Focus**

Provide a table and discussion that identifies the cosponsor applicant's timeline for accepting applications, granting charters, anticipated length of initial charter term(s), and the region(s) in which it anticipates chartering schools.

**Guidance:**

This table and the accompanying discussion shall include proposed dates for finalizing and publishing the cosponsor's charter application document and approval process including charter school application submissions, timelines for application review and contracting. In addition, provide anticipated opening dates and number(s) of schools, the geographic area where the charter schools may locate, the anticipated length of initial charter term(s) and, if applicable, the applicant's plans for authorizing charter schools in identified regions in the state. Responses to this section must clearly link to the five year financial plan and narrative requested in section IV. Capacity & Infrastructure, part D. Financial Resources.

## **IV. Capacity and Infrastructure**

### **A. Organizational Structures**

Describe the proposed governance and administrative structures to show how the applicant will uniformly administer high quality charter schools and fulfill the duties of a cosponsor. This description shall include:

- the specific job titles, roles and responsibilities of the oversight body and the staff charged with implementing the cosponsor's duties (it may be useful to include draft job descriptions for positions identified);
- how the proposed organizational structure will result in quality charter school authorizing that leads to increased student achievement;
- an organizational chart that identifies reporting and decision making structures the applicant proposes to use in fulfilling the duties of cosponsorship, and;
- specific plans as to how the cosponsor applicant will perform all of the duties required of sponsors in subsections 1002.33(5)(b) and (20) and section 1002.335, Florida Statutes.

Guidance:

This section should provide specific information as to how the cosponsor applicant will perform all of the duties required of sponsors in subsections 1002.33(5)(b) and (20) and section 1002.335, Florida Statutes. In addition, this section must convey that any entity interested in becoming a cosponsor pursuant to section 1002.335, Florida Statutes, provide evidence that it:

- has the necessary staff and infrastructure or has established the necessary contractual or interagency relationships to ensure its ability to handle all of the administrative responsibilities required of a charter school sponsor as set forth in subsection 1003.33(20), Florida Statutes;
- Is able to provide the necessary public and private resources and staff to ensure that it can monitor and support charter schools that are economically efficient and fiscally sound;
- Is committed to providing equal access to all students and to maintaining a diverse student population within its charter schools, including compliance with all applicable requirements of federal law;
- Is committed to serving low-income, low-performing, gifted, or underserved student populations;
- Has policies in place to protect its cosponsoring practices from conflicts of interest.

**IV. Capacity and Infrastructure (continued)**

**B. Policies and Processes**

- 1.** Identify the process the cosponsor applicant will use for policy setting and decision making associated with cosponsor duties. Will existing decision making bodies and routines be used? (For example, will a university's trustees use its current committee and meeting structure to oversee work with charter schools or will new structures and processes be created?) Describe how the proposed policy setting and decision making processes will function.
  
- 2.** Describe how the cosponsor applicant will interact with the governing boards and leadership of the charter schools it may approve. If the cosponsor applicant anticipates providing technical assistance to the school, describe what areas the technical assistance will address, what form the assistance will take, if the assistance is required as a condition of chartering, who will provide and who will fund such assistance. Include the cosponsor applicant's plans to ensure charter schools maintain autonomy while benefiting from the provision of technical assistance.
  
- 3.** Provide the cosponsor applicant's conflict of interest policy that addresses how the applicant will avoid any conflicts in administering its duties under a potential cosponsor agreement with the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.

## **IV. Capacity and Infrastructure (continued)**

### **C. Human Resources**

#### **1. Leadership and Administration**

Identify the members of the cosponsor applicant board, governance team, and, if appropriate, the cosponsor's designee(s) that will oversee the charter schools under a potential cosponsoring agreement with the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission. This master list shall include individual names, addresses, phone, email and job title. Also include a resume or curriculum vitae for each member and designee.

#### **2. Skills & Expertise**

Describe the expertise, experience and capacity of the applicant organization to effectively monitor, assess, evaluate and, when necessary, intervene in a school's operations including:

- Curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Governance;
- Financial soundness and;
- Regulatory and contract compliance.

### **D. Financial Resources**

Provide a five-year budget projection and narrative that describes how the applicant will fund the activities necessary for fulfilling cosponsor duties as described in this application.

#### Guidance:

If an applicant anticipates using existing funding streams to fulfill its duties as a cosponsor, describe how the revenue streams work and describe how they will provide the consistent, long term support necessary to ensure that the entity can provide staff, sponsoring, facility and overhead costs.

If the applicant anticipates using new revenue streams to fulfill its cosponsor duties, describe the sources of revenue, the duration of availability and how they will provide the consistent long term support necessary for the entity to successfully fulfill cosponsor duties. Responses shall also clarify any assumptions applicants make in terms of access to state and federal grant funding, foundation funding, or other sources of revenue anticipated for use in providing cosponsor duties. If such revenue includes funds from grants, foundations, or other such entities, letters affirming the provision of funds must be included in the appendix of the completed application. Similarly, if the applicant anticipates outside assistance through partnerships or other arrangements, documentation of those agreements must be included in the appendix.

Florida law states that the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission and its cosponsors may retain no more than the actual cost of its administrative overhead

costs expended to sponsor a charter school, up to 5% of the per pupil revenue from the first 500 students enrolled in a charter school it sponsors. If approved to become a cosponsor, access to a portion of that revenue will be defined in the cosponsor contract with the Commission. If the applicant assumes access to any portion of the allowable per pupil revenue, please indicate the percentage revenue assumed. Similarly, if the applicant anticipates charging the schools it sponsors fees for required technical assistance, those revenue assumptions should be reflected in this section. Responses to this request shall explicitly align with the cosponsor applicant's plans charter school approval, oversight and evaluation, as well as the number and size of schools it seeks to sponsor and the timing of each school's opening.

**IV. Cosponsor Charter School Application and Renewal Practices**

Describe the applicant's processes for granting charters and standards for renewing charters. This shall include:

- an outline of the cosponsor applicant's proposed application to start a charter school that includes all requirements under Florida law;
- a description of the charter application evaluation criteria and process the cosponsor applicant will use in selecting promising charter school founding groups;
- information regarding any financial assistance the cosponsor applicant anticipates providing the schools it charters;
- information regarding any assistance with securing and readying facilities the cosponsor applicant anticipates providing the schools it charters;
- specific and measurable academic, governance, fiscal and regulatory outcomes the applicant cosponsor plans to use in structuring charter contracting, performance and renewal decisions, and;
- a description of activities the cosponsor applicant will undertake to ensure a smooth closure and transition for students and families if the cosponsor applicant determines a charter school it authorizes does not merit renewal.

**Guidance:**

Quality charter school sponsors structure their policies and practices to focus the schools they oversee on high academic achievement from the application stage through renewal. Responses to this section shall establish the applicant's thorough understanding of what is required to start strong schools and hold them accountable through the charter renewal process.

Charter cosponsors are not required to provide direct financial or facilities assistance to charter schools; however, if the cosponsor applicant anticipates providing such assistance it should be included in this section of your application.

Note that cosponsors will be expected to use the model Florida Charter School Application as their template for all charter school applications. The model Florida Charter School Application is available on the Florida Charter School web site at [http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter\\_Schools/](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/)

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## V. Ongoing Oversight & Evaluation

### 1. Academic Oversight

Describe how the applicant will evaluate the overall academic performance of schools it proposes to authorize. Include the academic goals the applicant will require the schools to meet, as well as the evidence schools will be required to gather, analyze and present to indicate progress toward and achievement of those goals over the term of a charter. Also provide a detailed description of the cosponsor applicant's plans and methods for gathering and analyzing the evidence presented by the schools it authorizes. This description shall include:

- a commitment to ensuring that schools authorized by the applicant will administer required state assessments;
- other assessments the cosponsor will require schools to administer;
- other evidence of academic achievement the sponsor will use to establish progress toward and attainment of required academic goals;
- the criteria the cosponsor will use to evaluate evidence of achievement;
- how the cosponsor applicant will ensure schools properly deliver exceptional education services as required by federal and state law;
- the frequency and form (if any) of technical assistance on curriculum, instruction, assessment, instructional leadership and professional development the cosponsor anticipates providing or requiring of schools it authorizes and any fees that may be charged for such assistance (if fees are anticipated, provide estimated costs to schools);
- the frequency with which the cosponsor applicant will evaluate schools and a description of the form(s) such evaluation(s) might take;
- how this evaluation will incorporate the requirements of Florida's charter schools under state law and the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB);
- how the applicant will report on the progress of its schools annually to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission;
- how these goals will be incorporated into the charters entered into by the cosponsor and its schools, and;
- interventions the cosponsor will use if schools fail to meet established academic goals.

Applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the academic data schools are required to produce, analyze and report on as required under section 1002.335, Florida Statute, as well as understanding AYP (adequate yearly progress), the implications of failure to meet AYP, the requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers and the relevant implications.

Guidance:

While cosponsor applicants are not directly responsible for the day to day academic programs of the charter schools they sponsor, the Commission seeks to understand how the cosponsor applicant plans to promote attainment of high academic standards through its oversight practices. Applicants shall describe how they anticipate monitoring the progress of schools' academic programs and provide any standards, rubrics or benchmarks they intend to use or amend for use in their school review process. These shall include how the cosponsor applicant anticipates gathering, analyzing and reporting data and evidence of progress toward or attainment of goals to the school, the public, and the Commission.

Cosponsors may, but are not required to, provide academic technical assistance to schools. Those applicants planning to provide and/or require schools they sponsor to participate in technical assistance shall describe the assistance planned, identify research demonstrating the effectiveness of such technical assistance, and provide an indication of any planned fee structure (if any) that will accrue to the charter schools it oversees.

Activities described under this section should be reflected in the five year budget projection requested in section IV. Capacity & Infrastructure, part D. Financial Resources.

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**VI. Ongoing Oversight & Evaluation (continued)****2. Governance Oversight**

Describe how the cosponsor applicant will oversee the governance of the schools it authorizes while maintaining the schools' autonomy to implement missions and meet academic and fiscal goals. Address the following:

- the expectations for charter school board by-laws, size, expertise, composition, frequency of meetings and any other charter school governance requirements the cosponsor will require of schools it charters;
- the roles, required policies, procedures, and legal responsibilities of a charter school governing board and how these will be communicated to boards receiving a charter from the cosponsor applicant as required in constitutional and statutory requirements including requirements relating to public records, public meetings and the applicable State Board of Education rules;
- the type and frequency of interactions with and monitoring of charter boards authorized by the cosponsor applicant,
- the frequency and form (if any) of technical assistance the cosponsor applicant anticipates providing or requiring in assisting boards in governing effectively and whether or not the applicant anticipates charging schools a fee for this service (if charging a fee, provide cost estimates);
- the criteria the cosponsor applicant will use in assessing charter school board effectiveness, and;
- interventions the cosponsor will make should a governing board fail to meet its responsibilities under the terms of its charter or the requirements of the law.

**Guidance:**

Applicants will find it useful to consider responses in this section in the context of crafting their own charter school application and approval processes as well as the actual charter contract a cosponsor anticipates using. Responses shall convey a commitment to charter school autonomy, but also a clear understanding of high quality charter school governance and the mechanisms, policies, and practices that reflect them.

Activities described under this section should be reflected in the five year budget projection requested in section IV. Capacity & Infrastructure, part D. Financial Resources.

**VI. Ongoing Oversight & Evaluation (continued)****3. Fiscal and Regulatory Oversight**

Provide a description as to how the cosponsor applicant will oversee the fiscal and regulatory performance of the schools it seeks to authorize.

Include the following:

- a description of the cosponsor applicant's understanding of Florida's charter school funding mechanisms, grants and other forms of revenue available to charter schools;
- financial performance indicators, processes and evaluation criteria the applicant will use to track the financial performance of schools it authorizes;
- a description of how the cosponsor will evaluate charter schools' financial policies and practices and the extent to which they promote a strong academic program;
- an explanation of how the applicant will assist and monitor the schools it sponsors in fulfilling all regulatory requirements of Florida's charter schools;
- the frequency and form of fiscal and regulatory reporting the cosponsor will require and how such requirements will be enforced;
- the frequency and form of technical assistance, and any fees for such assistance, the cosponsor proposes providing schools in meeting their fiscal and regulatory obligations, if any;
- what interventions the cosponsor will initiate with schools failing to meet their financial and regulatory obligations, and;
- how the cosponsor will report to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission annually on the fiscal health of the schools it cosponsors.

**Guidance:**

Applicants will find it useful to consider responses in this section in the context of crafting their own charter school application and approval processes. Responses shall convey a clear understanding of the regulatory and legal obligations of a charter school governing board and the methods by which the cosponsor applicant will promote autonomy while ensuring charter schools fulfill their duties to ensure efficient governance, compliance and fiscal prudence. Activities described under this section shall be reflected in the five year budget projection requested in section IV. Capacity & Infrastructure, part D. Financial Resources.

**VII. Additional Information Provided by the cosponsor applicant.****Guidance:**

Applicants shall provide any additional information necessary to convey the ability to serve as a high quality cosponsor of Florida charter schools not requested in earlier sections of the application.

**VIII. Action Plan**

Provide a proposed action plan that identifies the specific steps, sequence and timeline to accomplish the plans provided in this application from the signing of a potential cosponsor agreement through the first full year of overseeing schools.

**Guidance:**

Responses shall identify the steps the applicant anticipates from the time of a potential cosponsor agreement to the planned opening of the first cosponsored charter school(s), through at least the first full year of overseeing charter schools. Applicants may choose (but are not required) to present an action plan that aligns with the five year budget projection provided with this application.

Applicants shall clearly identify dates for releasing its charter application, the period of time the applicant anticipates allowing between application release and submission deadline, the commencement and conclusion of charter granting and contracting, technical assistance (if any) it anticipates providing, and the timing of pre-opening reviews, reporting and monitoring activities it will conduct for schools it sponsors.

The action plan must reflect a strong understanding of the timeline required for charter school applicants to review an application and prepare a thorough submission, as well as the time necessary for charter school applicants to plan prior to opening and serving students.

**IX. Appendix**

**Guidance:**

Applicants will find it helpful to include specific examples, research, organizational resolutions affirming the application submission or letters of support to illuminate their submission. Make sure that all attachments are included in both the written and electronic submissions of the application.

**Florida Schools of Excellence Commission  
Co-Sponsor Application  
Form FSEC-1**

**COSPONSOR APPLICATION EVALUATION INSTRUMENT**

This instrument is designed to guide a thorough and rigorous evaluation of co-sponsor applications submitted to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission (FSE). Reviewers of co-sponsor applications will use this instrument to evaluate the quality of responses, against defined standards, provided in the written application (Part A) and the applicant interview (Part B).

**PART A: WRITTEN APPLICATION EVALUATION**

The following presents standards, or criteria, by which reviewers will evaluate the responses to the information requirements of the written co-sponsor application all in furtherance of the information required in section 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes. Part A is to be used to evaluate the responses provided in the written application only.

For each major section of the application, reviewers will assess if the responses provided:

- Meet the Standard
- Partially Meet the Standard
- Do Not Meet the Standard

Furthermore, reviewers will identify the strengths of the responses to each major section of the application as well as concerns/additional questions. This information will be used in the applicant interview to:

- Corroborate information provided in the written application, and
- Address issues of concern/ that need further clarification.

Information gathered during the interview, as well as an assessment of the capacity of the applicant, will inform the recommendation for co-sponsorship.

**I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Reviewers will look for:

- a compelling vision for serving Florida students through charter school co-sponsorship;
- a clear description of the student needs to be served through charter school co-sponsorship;
- a clear plan for how the co-sponsor will ensure that the charter schools it co-sponsors meet those specific needs, and
- evidence that the applicant's authorizing approach will support improved student achievement.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**II. COMMITMENT TO QUALITY**

**A. Mission**

Reviewers will look for:

- a meaningful, measurable, and manageable mission statement with a primary focus on improving student achievement;
- a compelling rationale for serving Florida students through charter school co-sponsorship;
- a clear description of the student needs, in particular for low-income, low-performing, gifted and under-served students, to be served through charter school co-sponsorship;
- a compelling rationale for how the co-sponsor will succeed in meeting these specific needs;
- a compelling description of the co-sponsor’s educational orientation or operation that provides a strong foundation for quality charter school co-sponsorship, and
- a demonstration of the organization’s capacity to establish and sustain a , quality co-sponsoring function.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**B. Goals**

Reviewers will look for:

- a genuine commitment to accountability for results, in particular for high student achievement;
- compelling goals that are consistent with the co-sponsor’s mission and program, and
- goals that are clear, measurable and data-driven.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**III. CO-SPONSORING FOCUS**

Reviewers will look for:

- a clear identification of the proposed area of service, and
- a rational strategy and timeline for successful and purposeful charter school co-sponsorship.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**IV. CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**A. Organizational Structures**

Reviewers will look for an organizational structure that:

- is consistent with the co-sponsor’s mission and program;
- promotes increased student achievement in the schools it co-sponsors;
- has the infrastructure necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of charter school co-sponsorship;
- is able to secure the funds necessary to monitor and support charter schools;
- is able to manage public funds effectively and responsibly;
- is committed to providing equal access to all students and to maintaining a diverse student population with its charter schools;
- is committed to serving low-income, low-performing, gifted or underserved student populations, and
- is supported by policies that protect its co-sponsoring practices from conflicts of interest.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**B. Policies and Procedures**

Reviewers will look for:

- viable processes for policy development and decision making, and
- a concrete philosophy and plan for interaction with charter school governing boards that upholds the school’s autonomy.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

**C. Human Resources**

Reviewers will look for:

- a staffing plan that is clear and adequate to handle all administrative responsibilities required of a charter school co-sponsor;
- clearly delineated roles and responsibilities between the co-sponsor’s governance and management functions;
- a clear reporting structure and solid plan for decision making;
- expertise, experience and capacity to effectively monitor, assess and evaluate a school’s educational program;
- expertise, experience and capacity to effectively monitor, assess and evaluate a school’s governing body;
- expertise, experience and capacity to effectively monitor, assess and evaluate a school’s financial operation, and
- expertise, experience and capacity of the applicant to effectively monitor, assess, and evaluate a school’s compliance with legal requirements.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Strengths	Reference
Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

**D. Financial Resources**

Reviewers will look for:

- a budget that is consistent with all parts of the co-sponsorship plan and program, including charter school approval, oversight and evaluation, as well as the number and size of schools it seeks to sponsor and the timing of each school’s opening;
- a realistic assessment of projected resources of revenue that are adequate to ensure the fiscal viability of the co-sponsorship function;
- evidence that the budget demonstrates knowledge of the practical matters relevant to approving, overseeing and evaluating charter schools;
- a compelling rationale for the percentage of revenue, if any, the applicant proposes to retain from the schools it sponsors, and

- a clear description of any fees the applicant anticipates charging the schools it sponsors for services provided.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**V. CO-SPONSOR CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION & RENEWAL**

Reviewers will look for:

- application and renewal standards consistent with high student achievement;
- a description of the applicant’s proposed application process that follows fair procedures and rigorous criteria;
- a commitment to only granting charters to applicant groups with the capacity to establishing and operating a quality charter school;
- a description of clear, measurable and rigorous academic, governance, fiscal and regulatory outcomes by which the co-sponsor will evaluate the school on an ongoing basis and for renewal;
- a clear description of the plans, if any, to provide financial support or facilities assistance to the charter schools it sponsors in a manner that respects school autonomy, and
- an understanding of the co-sponsor’s responsibilities to ensure an orderly closure if a charter school it authorizes does not merit renewal.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**VI. ONGOING OVERSIGHT AND EVALUATION**

**A. Academic Oversight**

Reviewers will look for:

- a strong commitment to high educational standards for all children;
- a clear understanding of the academic data schools are required, according to federal and state requirements, to produce, analyze and report on, and
- a realistic and comprehensive plan for gathering and using multiple sources of academic data to evaluate student performance.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**B. Governance Oversight**

Reviewers will look for:

- a clear understanding of quality charter school governance;
- clear governance standards to which the co-sponsor will hold the schools it sponsors, and
- a realistic and comprehensive plan for gathering and using multiple sources of data to evaluate the effectiveness of a school’s governing body.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**C. Fiscal and Regulatory Oversight**

Reviewers will look for:

- a clear understanding of fiscal and regulatory obligations of charter schools;
- a clear articulation of the fiscal and compliance standards to which the co-sponsor will hold the schools it sponsors, and
- a realistic and comprehensive plan for gathering and using multiple sources of data to evaluate the fiscal performance and regulatory compliance.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**VII. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

Reviewers will look for:

- additional information and evidence , if any, that supports the applicant’s capacity to serve as a quality charter school co-sponsor.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**VIII. ACTION PLAN**

Reviewers will look for:

- a realistic and comprehensive set of specific steps that will be taken to establish a quality co-sponsoring function, and

- the degree to which the applicant’s timelines and plans are consistent with the approving and opening quality charter schools equipped to serve students well.

<b>Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Partially Meets the Standard</b>	<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>Concerns and Additional Questions</b>	<b>Reference</b>

**SUMMARY COMMENTS AND INTERVIEW RECOMMENDATION**

*(maximum 500 words)*

Each part of your summary comments should, in a few sentences, provide the Commission with a clear understanding of your overall impression of the written application as well as the most significant strengths and/or weaknesses.

***Commitment to Quality***  
[... SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***Co-Sponsoring Focus***  
[...SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***Capacity and Infrastructure***  
[... SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***Co-Sponsor Charter school Application and Renewal***  
[...SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation***  
[... SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***[Additional Materials]***  
[... SUMMARY COMMENTS]

***Action Plan***  
[... SUMMARY COMMENTS]

**PART B: APPLICANT INTERVIEW EVALUATION SUMMARY**

The purpose of the applicant interview is to assess the following in furtherance of the information required in section 1002.335(6)(c), Florida Statutes:

- Assess overall capacity of the applicant to serve as a quality co-sponsor;
- Clarify any components of the written application for which reviewers had questions or require additional information to fully evaluate, and
- Corroborate information provided in the written application.

Interviewers should use, but not be limited to, the following guiding questions to assess the degree to which the interview supports the evaluation of the written co-sponsor application.

1. Did the applicant demonstrate the required capacity to serve as a quality co-sponsor? Provide an analysis of the applicant's demonstration of capacity to serve in this role.

██████████

2. Did the applicant adequately and sufficiently address any concerns and/or questions identified during the evaluation of the written application? Provide an analysis of how the applicant addressed any concerns and/or questions identified during the evaluation of the written application. The analysis should tie directly to specific ratings given in the written application evaluation.

██████████

3. Are there remaining, additional and/or new concerns and/or questions that may inhibit the applicant's ability to serve as a quality co-sponsor? Explain.

██████████

4. Did the applicant articulate key components of their plans for co-sponsorship that corroborate the information provided in the written application? Explain.

██████████

5. Provide an overall assessment of the applicant's performance during the interview.

██████████

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