

Virtual Charter Schools ([BACK TO TOP](#))

1. What are virtual charter schools?

Virtual charter schools are charter schools that are full-time public virtual schools. Students access the curriculum and instruction, and interact with teachers, outside of a traditional school setting, usually from home.

2. Can virtual charter schools provide part-time virtual instruction?

No. Virtual charter schools are authorized to provide full-time virtual instruction.

3. What grade levels may virtual charter schools serve?

Virtual charter schools may serve eligible district students in grades K-12.

4. How are virtual charter schools funded?

Virtual charter schools are funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) and the funding is based on 'successful completions' rather than on seat time (attendance and enrollment). Virtual charter schools may report Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for all FEFP funding programs (Basic, ESE, Career Education and ESOL). Like other virtual programs and schools, virtual charter schools may not receive any funding for the purpose of fulfilling class size requirements.

5. May virtual charter schools offer courses during the summer?

Yes. A virtual charter school may offer courses for virtual charter school students who do not complete their virtual courses by the end of the regular school year. The courses may be completed no later than the amendment deadline for the final enrollment survey for that year (Survey 4).

A student who has unsuccessfully completed a virtual course during the regular school year at the virtual charter school and who must re-take the course in order to be eligible to graduate with the student's class may enroll in a virtual course during the summer for credit recovery.

6. May students who did not pass traditional or virtual education courses during the school year be able to take credit recovery courses from virtual charter schools as well as district virtual instruction programs?

Virtual charter schools are authorized to offer full-time programs. Therefore, they may offer credit recovery courses for their full-time virtual charter school students. However, students needing credit recovery from courses not passed in another school may not take courses from virtual charter schools on a part-time basis.

7. How are virtual charter schools held accountable for student learning?

Virtual charter schools receive school grades based on the performance of their full-time students like other public schools in the district and state; are funded based on successful completions; are school choice options for parents; and must meet performance criteria outlined in their charters with their sponsor.

8. *Are virtual charter school students able to take state-required and district-required student assessments at a district school?*

Yes, the cost of state-required or district-required student assessments, including the cost of virtual charter school students' access to and use of district testing facilities, are contained with the fee, of up to 5 percent, retained by the school district.

9. *What students are eligible to enroll in virtual charter schools?*

Students enrolling in virtual charter schools must meet the eligibility requirements of section 1002.455, F.S.

- The student has spent the prior school year in attendance at a public school in this state and was enrolled and reported by a public school district for funding during the preceding October and February for purposes of the FEFP surveys.
- The student is a dependent child of a member of the United States Armed Forces who was transferred within the last 12 months to this state from another state or from a foreign country pursuant to the parent's permanent change of station orders.
- The student was enrolled during the prior school year in a school district virtual instruction program under this section.
- The student has a sibling who is currently enrolled in the school district virtual instruction program and that sibling was enrolled in such program at the end of the prior school year.
- The student is eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade.
- The student is eligible to enter grades 2 through 5 and is enrolled full-time in a school district virtual instruction program, virtual charter school or FLVS.

Virtual charter schools cannot enroll students from other districts, unless there is an interdistrict agreement or good cause as outlined in section 1002.33(10) (a), F.S.

10. *What steps are required to become a virtual charter school in Florida?*

To become a virtual charter school, the applicant must contract with FLVS or a FDOE-approved virtual instruction program provider to provide the charter school's virtual instruction program. The interested party must submit a virtual charter application using the Model Virtual Charter School application to the school district in which it would like to operate. Documentation of the contract with an approved provider must be included with the application. Virtual charter applicants follow the same timelines for approval as applicants for regular charter schools. Charter applications are due on August 1 of the year prior to the planned opening. The model Virtual Charter School Application is located at the following website:
http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/Charter_Schools/Forms_Charter.asp.

11. *How can a current charter school become a virtual charter school?*

A charter school must submit an application for approval to its sponsor to open a new charter school (virtual) or amend its existing contract. If a charter school submits a new application to its sponsor, the application must include documentation that the applicant has contracted with FLVS or an approved provider of virtual instruction programs. The list of approved providers is located on the following website:

<http://www.fldoe.org/Schools/virtual-schools/DistrictVIP.asp>. A charter school may apply to become an approved provider of virtual instruction programs.

12. Can a brick and mortar charter school provide blended-learning?

Yes. A charter school may implement blended-learning courses which combine traditional classroom instruction and virtual instruction. Students in blended-learning courses must be full-time students of the charter school and receive the online instruction in a classroom setting at the charter school.

13. What are the requirements for instructional personnel who provide virtual instruction for blended courses?

Instructional personnel may be employees of the charter school or may be under contract to provide instructional services to charter school students. At a minimum, the instructional personnel must hold a state certificate as required in section 1012.55, F.S., or a school district adjunct certification under section 1012.57, F.S., for the subject area of the blended-learning course. Charter school employees must undergo background screening as provided in section 1012.32, F.S.

14. What are the funding and performance accountability requirements for blended-learning courses?

These are the same as those for traditional courses in traditional public schools. The funding is based on seat time (attendance and enrollment), and the student's charter school will receive a school grade based on the performance of students enrolled in the charter school.