

The School District of Manatee County, Florida



CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

REVIEW PROCESS

The mission of the Manatee County School District is to inspire our students with a passion for learning, empowered to pursue their dreams confidently and creatively while contributing to our community, nation and world.

REVIEW TEAM GUIDELINES

Completed Application Cover Sheet

Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose

Mission statement is compelling.

Mission statement is clear and concise and it indicates what the school intends to do.

Evidence that priorities have been established for the school - they are clearly defined

What will be the school's focus?

Are the goals and objectives focused on improving learning and academic achievement?

Are the objectives as stated obtainable and measureable?

What innovative learning method will be incorporated?

(Optional) What educational practices will this school incorporate or introduce to provide rigorous competition for the public school and/or expand the capacity of all public schools?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Target Population

Target population is clearly defined.

Does the target population as identified in application reflect an effort at diversity?
Are there clearly defined strategies of how the population be recruited? Is the goal obtainable?

Is there a manageable plan for how the enrollment projections will be reached?

Are the plans consistent with the enrollment projections as stated on the cover sheet?

Is there evidence that attention will be given to achieve class size requirements?

Note: It will be important to keep the target population in mind when reviewing the academic program to ensure that the plans will meet the needs of the target population.

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Educational Program Design

Is there a detailed description of the school's daily schedule and annual calendar, including the annual number of days and hours of instructional time?

Is there a detailed description of the proposed charter school's educational program and/or curriculum approach, emphasizing the innovative instructional methods or approaches to be used?

Is the design based on effective, research-based educational practices and teaching methods, and high standards for student learning?

Is there a detailed description related to the research base for the educational program and/or curriculum approach being used, including an explanation of how students will be provided services to attain the New Generation State Standards?

Is there an explanation of how the educational program aligns with the school's mission?

If the school is replicating an existing school design, can the applicant demonstrate the success of the existing academic program, including compliance with legal requirements?

If the school is replicating an existing school design, can the applicant describe how the existing program has impacted student achievement?

Is there evidence provided that the applicant has the capacity to deliver the educational program design as described, including the financial and human resources?

Education Program Design

Strengths:**Weaknesses:****Recommendations:****Questions:**

Curriculum Plan

Does the applicant describe the school's curriculum in the core academic areas, illustrating how it will prepare students to achieve the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards?

How will students be prepared to attain the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards?

(For high school only) Does the applicant describe the major areas of interest how high school students as required by section 1003.428, F.S.?

Is there a description of the foundation material that will be used to support the curriculum?

Does the applicant describe the school's reading curriculum, including provision for students reading at grade level and those reading below grade level? *The reading curriculum must be consistent with effective teaching strategies and be grounded in scientifically-based reading research.*

Does the applicant explain how exceptional education students and English language learners who enter the school below grade level will benefit from the curriculum?

Does the applicant describe how the effectiveness of the curriculum will be evaluated?
Monitored? Changed?

Curriculum Plan

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

Is there evidence of how student academic progress will be monitored?

Is there evidence of policies and procedures for appropriate student placement and promotion?

Is there an explanation of how baseline achievement data will be established, collected, used?

How will be educational program design be adjusted to meet the identified strengths and weaknesses of students?

Is there a description of the types and frequency of assessments to be used by the school? How will be assessment data be communicated to teachers? Students? Parents?

Is there any discussion about the validity and reliability of the assessment tools as related to the target population?

Is there evidence of how the school will monitor its performance as compared to closely comparable student populations? How will the school use this information?

Is there a clearly articulated plan for sharing student performance data with the parents?

Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Recommendations:

Questions:

Exceptional Students

Is there evidence of how the school will comply with state and federal requirements for serving students with disabilities, including the procedures that will be utilized for identifying students with special needs, developing Individualized Education Plans and 504 plans and providing a full range of services? (*An understanding of IDEA is critical to effective implementation.*)

Is there discussion of the staffing plan for the special education program, including the number of qualified staff?

Is there description of how the school will serve gifted and talented students if they are part of the target population?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

English Language Learners

Is there evidence of how the school will comply with state and federal requirements for serving English language learners, including the procedures that will be utilized for identifying students, developing Education Plans?

Is there discussion of the staffing plan for the ESOL program, including the number of qualified staff?

Is there discussion in the educational program design for the full range of services to meet the needs of the English language learners?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

School Climate and Discipline

Did the applicant describe the school's philosophy regarding student behavior?

Did the applicant describe the school's Code of Student Conduct?

How will the school manage suspensions? Dismissals? Recommendations for expulsions?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

Governance

Did the application document the legal structure of the school, including a Certificate of Incorporation?

Did the applicant provide an organizational chart for the school, including a narrative description?

Is there evidence of the responsibilities and obligations of the governing board?

Is there evidence of the by-laws guiding the operation of the governing board?

How will the founding board transition into the governing board?

Did the applicant provide a list of each proposed board member with a brief description of the person's background?. *(The background information should indicate the person's capacity to support the operation of the school.)*

Is there any evidence that parents will be involved in the governance of the school?

Governance

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Management

Does the applicant provide job descriptions for each administrative position and teach that identify key roles, responsibilities and accountability?

Does the applicant describe the criteria and process that will be used to select the school's leader and the process for evaluating the school's leader?

Does the applicant describe the staffing plan commensurate with the enrollment projections provided?

Does the applicant describe the recruitment, selection, development and evaluation of the school's staff?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Education Service Providers (optional)

What services will be provided by the ESP? Is this reflected in the proposed budget?

If an ESP is used, did the applicant provide a draft contract, including the proposed services, performance evaluation measures, fee structure, renewal and termination provisions, terms of property ownership, etc.)

What criteria was used to select the ESP?

How will the ESP be involved in the financial management of the proposed charter school? What internal controls will be in place to guide this relationship?

What will be the relationship of the governing board with the ESP?

Did the applicant provide a summary of the ESP's history, including how its educational philosophy aligns with the school's mission?

What is the experience of the senior management person of the ESP?

Did the applicant provide a list of other schools with which the ESP has contracts, including contact information and student and financial performance data of the other schools?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Employment

Is there a clearly defines compensation plan, including whether staff will be publicly or privately employed?

Did the applicant describe the personnel policies and procedures manual?

What will the staff be required to do, including expectations for participation in the school's professional development program?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Parent and Community Support and Partnerships

How does the school intent to involve parents in its operations?

Did the applicant describe any community partnerships?

What are the identified methods that will be used for resolving disputes between parents and the school?

Will the school use contracts that will be required upon enrollment?

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

What is the schools plan for recruiting students and reaching the target populations?

How does the school intend to achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves?

Did the applicant clearly describe the enrollment policies and procedures, including timelines, criteria and/or any preferences for enrollment and the lottery process?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

BUSINESS PLAN

Facilities

Is there evidence of a realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program and target population? Timeline?

Is there evidence of provisions for the facility in the financial plan?

Did the applicant describe how the facility will meet the school's capacity needs for proposed enrollment?

Did the applicant explain the anticipated costs for the facility i.e. rent, renovations, utilities, maintenance? Is there a special funding source for the facility?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Transportation

Did the applicant discuss the school's plan for transportation?

How will the school ensure that transportation is not a barrier for enrollment?

Food Service

Did the applicant discuss the school's plan for food service?

Is there evidence that the applicant is aware of the requirements for the free and reduced lunch program?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Budget

Did the applicant provide an operating budget for each year of the proposed charter, including revenue projects, expenses, and anticipated fund balances? (*The statutes require a five year plan*).

Did the applicant provide a start up budget covering the time from the date of the approved application to the beginning of the first fiscal year?

Did the applicant provide a detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating and start-up budget are based? (*This information must fully explain how budgetary figures were determined.*)

Did the applicant provide the monthly cash flow projections for the school's start-up period?

Is there evidence of a fundraising plan?

Did the applicant indicate the school's spending priorities?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Financial Management and Oversight

Did the applicant describe:

- Who will manage the school's finances?
- Financial controls to be used to safeguard finances
- Method by which accounting records will be maintained
- Methods for storing student and financial records
- Insurance coverage the school will obtain i.e. health, worker's compensation, general liability, property insurance, director's and officer's liability

Is it evident that the fiscal management system is appropriate and follows the generally accepted accounting principles and properly safeguards assets?

Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Recommendations:
Questions:

Action Plan

Did the applicant provide a school start-up timeline?

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Does the application include a signed statement of the assurances?

Reviewer

Date