

MODEL FLORIDA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: _____

NAME OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION/MUNICIPALITY UNDER WHICH CHARTER WILL BE ORGANIZED OR OPERATED:

The Organization has applied for 501(c)(3) Non-profit Status: Yes _____ No _____

Provide the name of the person who will serve as the **primary contact** for this Application. The **primary contact** should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this Application.

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: _____

TITLE/RELATIONSHIP TO NONPROFIT: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PRIMARY TELEPHONE: () _____ ALTERNATE TELEPHONE: () _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (if any): _____

NAME OF PARTNER/PARENT ORGANIZATION (if any): _____

Projected School Opening: _____

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Projected Student Enrollment	Student Enrollment Capacity (if known)
First Year			
Second Year			
Third Year			
Fourth Year			
Fifth Year			

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the applicant.

Signature

Title

Printed Name

Date

I. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

Section 1: Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose

- A. Provide the mission statement for the proposed charter school.
The mission statement should, in a few concise sentences, indicate what the school intends to do, for whom and to what degree. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire application.
- B. Describe how the school will utilize the guiding principles found in section 1002.33(2)(a), F.S.
In accordance with the law, charter schools shall be guided by the following principles:
- *Meet high standards of student achievement while providing parents flexibility to choose among diverse educational opportunities within the state's public school system.*
 - *Promote enhanced academic success and financial efficiency by aligning responsibility and accountability.*
 - *Provide parents with sufficient information on whether their child is reading at grade level and whether the child gains at least a year's worth of learning for every year spent in the charter school.*
- C. Describe how the school will meet the prescribed purposes for charter schools found in section 1002.33(2)(b), F.S.
In accordance with the law, charter schools shall fulfill the following purposes:
- *Improve student learning and academic achievement.*
 - *Increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on low-performing students and reading.*
 - *Encourage the use of innovative learning methods.*
 - *Require the measurement of learning outcomes.*
- D. Describe how the charter school will fulfill, if applicable, the optional purposes of charter schools found in section 1002.33(2)(c), F.S.
In accordance with the law, charter schools may fulfill the following purposes:
- *Create innovative measurement tools.*
 - *Provide rigorous competition within the public school district to stimulate continual improvement in all public schools.*
 - *Expand the capacity of the public school system.*
 - *Mitigate the educational impact created by the development of new residential dwelling units.*
 - *Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including ownership of the learning program at the school site.*

Evaluation Criteria: Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose

Reviewers will look for:

- A compelling mission statement that defines the guiding principles and values of the school.
- A set of priorities that are meaningful, manageable and measurable, and focus on improving student outcomes.

Section 2: Target Population and Student Body

- A. Describe the anticipated target population to be served.
If applicable, applicants should describe if they will target, in accordance with the law, certain populations defined in section 1002.33(10)(e), F.S.
- B. Provide the following projection for each year of proposed operation: the grades that the school will serve, the projected number of students to be served in each grade, the number of students expected in each class, and the total number of students enrolled.

Evaluation Criteria: Target Population and Student Body

Reviewers will look for:

- An understanding of the students the charter school intends to serve.
- If the applicant proposes to target certain populations, the projected student body should align with the overall mission of the school.

Section 3: Educational Program Design

- A. Describe the school's daily schedule and annual calendar, including the annual number of days and hours of instructional time.
- B. Describe the proposed charter school's educational program.
- C. Describe the research base for the educational program.
- D. Explain how the educational program aligns with the school's mission.
- E. Explain how the services the school will provide to the target population will help them attain the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, as required by section 1002.33, F.S.

If the school intends to replicate an existing school design¹:

¹ An applicant is considered to be replicating an "existing school design" if:

- The proposed school is substantially similar *overall* to at least one school, and
- The individuals and/or organization involved in the establishment and operation of the proposed school are deeply involved in the operation of the similar school(s).

- F. Provide evidence that the existing design has been effective and successful in raising student achievement.

The effectiveness of an existing school design can be demonstrated by providing evidence of organizational viability and the success of the academic program, including compliance with legal requirements, as well as a direct relationship between program elements and student achievement.

- G. Describe the applicant's capacity to replicate an existing school design.

The capacity to replicate can be demonstrated by providing credible and well-defined strategies for replication, including the financial and human resources necessary to replicate the design.

Evaluation Criteria: Educational Program Design

Reviewers will look for an educational program design that:

- Is clear and coherent;
- Is based on effective, research-based educational practices and teaching methods, and high standards for student learning;
- Aligns with the school's mission and responds to the needs of the school's target population, and
- Presents evidence that the proposed approach will lead to improved student performance for the school's target population.

Section 4: Curriculum Plan

- A. Describe the school's curriculum in the core academic areas, illustrating how it will prepare students to achieve the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. If the curriculum has not been developed, describe how the plan for curriculum development shows how students will be prepared to attain the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.
- B. Describe the research base and foundation materials that were used *or will be used* to develop the curriculum.
- C. Describe the school's reading curriculum. Provide evidence that reading is a primary focus of the school and that there is a curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading at grade level or higher and a separate curriculum and strategy for students reading below grade level.
The reading curriculum must be consistent with effective teaching strategies and be grounded in scientifically-based reading research.
- D. Explain how exceptional students and students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.
- E. Describe proposed curriculum areas to be included other than the core academic areas.

For example, a plan to implement a specific program, such as a widely-used curriculum, would not be categorized as the replication of an existing school design.

F. Describe how the effectiveness of the curriculum will be evaluated.

Evaluation Criteria: Curriculum Plan

Reviewers will look for a curriculum plan that:

- Provides a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning;
- Is research-based;
- Is consistent with the school's mission, educational philosophy and instructional approach;
- Will enable students to attain Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and receive a year's worth of learning for each year enrolled, and
- Will be appropriate for all students at all levels.

Section 5: Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

- A. State the school's educational goals and objectives for improving student achievement. Indicate how much academic improvement students are expected to show each year, how student progress and performance will be evaluated, and the specific results to be attained.
- B. Describe the school's student placement procedures and promotion standards.
- C. If the school will serve high school students, *describe the school's graduation requirements, to include the methods used to determine if a student has satisfied the requirements specified in section 1003.43, F.S., and any proposed additional requirements.*
- D. Describe how baseline achievement data will be *established*, collected, and used. *Describe the methods used to identify the educational strengths and needs of students and how these baseline rates will be compared to the academic progress of the same students attending the charter school.*
- E. Identify the *types and frequency* of assessments that the school will use to measure and monitor student performance.
- F. Describe how student assessment and performance data will be used to evaluate and inform instruction.
- G. Describe how student assessment and performance information will be shared with students and with parents.

Evaluation Criteria: Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

Reviewers will look for:

- Measurable educational goals and objectives that set high standards for student performance.
- Promotion standards that are based on high expectations and provide clear criteria for promotion from one level to the next, and for graduation (if applicable).
- Evidence that a range of valid and reliable assessments will be used to measure student performance.
- An assessment plan that is sufficiently frequent and detailed to determine whether students are making adequate progress.
- Evidence that data will inform decisions about adjustments to the educational program.
- Plans for sharing student performance information that will keep students and parents well informed of academic progress.

Section 6: Exceptional Students

- A. Please indicate the level of service that the school will provide to students with disabilities by selecting from the list below.
- The school will serve students with disabilities whose needs can be met in a regular classroom environment (at least 80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers) with the provision of reasonable supplementary supports and services and/or modifications and accommodations.
 - The school will serve students with disabilities whose needs can be met in a regular classroom and resource room combination (between 40%-80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers) with the provision of reasonable supplementary supports and services and/or modifications and accommodations.
 - The school will serve students with disabilities whose needs can be met in a separate classroom (less than 40% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers).
- B. Describe how the school will ensure that students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the charter school.
- C. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor to ensure the charter school is the appropriate placement for each student with a disability, based on the student's needs.
- D. Describe how the school will utilize the regular school facilities and adapt them to the needs of exceptional students to the maximum extent appropriate, including the use of supplementary aids and services.
- E. Describe how the school's effectiveness in serving exceptional education students will be evaluated.
- F. Provide the school's projected population of students with disabilities and describe how the projection was made.

- G. Identify the staffing plan, based on the above projection, for the school's special education program, including the number and qualifications of staff.
- H. Describe how the school will serve gifted and talented students.

Evaluation Criteria: Exceptional Students

Reviewers will look for:

- A clear description of the level of service the school will provide to students with disabilities.
- A clear description of how the school will ensure students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment.
- An understanding and commitment to collaborating with the sponsor to ensure that placement decisions for students with disabilities will be made based on each student's unique needs.
- An appropriate plan for evaluating the school's effectiveness in serving exceptional students, including gifted.
- A realistic enrollment projection (SWD) and a staffing plan that aligns with the projection.

Section 7: English Language Learners

- A. Describe how the school will comply with state and federal requirements for serving English language learners, including the procedures that will be utilized for identifying such students and providing support services.
- B. Identify the staffing plan for the school's English language learner program, including the number and qualifications of staff.

Evaluation Criteria: English Language Learners

Reviewers will look for:

- Demonstrated understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of English language learners.
- A commitment to serving the full range of needs of English language learners.
- Sound plans for educating English language learner students that reflect the full range of programs and services required to provide all students with a high quality education.
- Demonstrated capacity to meet the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding the education of English language learners.

Section 8: School Climate and Discipline

- A. Describe the school's planned approach to classroom management and student discipline.
- B. Describe the school's Code of Conduct, including the school's policies for discipline, suspension, dismissal and recommendation for expulsion.

Evaluation Criteria: School Climate and Discipline

Reviewers will look for:

- A sound approach to classroom management and student discipline.
- Legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension, dismissal and recommendation for expulsion, including the school's code of conduct.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

Section 9: Governance

- A. Describe the legal structure of the governing board. If the governing board has not yet formed, describe the plan, including a timeline, for formation. Description must demonstrate how school will organize as or be operated by a non-profit organization.
- B. Provide an organizational chart for the school and a narrative description of the chart. Clearly describe the proposed reporting structure to the governing board and the relationship of the board to the school's leader and administration.
- C. Provide a description of the responsibilities and obligations of the governing board as a whole.
- D. Describe the policies and procedures by which the governing board will operate, including board powers and duties; board member selection, removal procedures and term limits; code of ethics, conflict of interest, and frequency of meetings.
Charter school governing boards must be guided by a set of by-laws that define how the board will operate. Applicants may include their proposed by-laws.
- E. Explain how the founding group for the school intends to transition to a governing board.
- F. Describe the plans for board member recruitment and development, including the orientation process for new members and ongoing professional development.
- G. List each of the proposed members of the school's governing board, indicating any ex-officio members and vacant seats to be filled. For each proposed member, provide a brief

description of the person's background that highlights the contribution he/she intends to make through service as a governing board member and any office of the board that individual holds.

H. Outline the methods to be used for resolving disputes between a parent and the school.

If the school is filing the application in conjunction with a college, university, museum, educational institution, another nonprofit organization or any other partner, provide the following information:

- I. Name of the partner organization.
- J. Name of the contact person at the partner organization and that person's full contact information.
- K. A description of the nature and purpose of the school's partnership with the organization.
- L. An explanation of how the partner organization will be involved in the governance of the school.

Evaluation Criteria: Governance

Reviewers will look for:

- A governing board that is legally structured, or has a plan to organize in conformity with the laws of Florida.
- A clear description of the governing board's obligations and responsibilities.
- Evidence that the proposed governing board will contribute to the wide range of knowledge and skill needed to oversee a charter school.
- A clear, sensible delineation of roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and school management.
- A clear, sensible method for resolving disputes between a parent and the school.

Section 10: Management

- A. Describe the management structure of the school. Include job descriptions for teachers and each administrative position that identify key roles, responsibilities and accountability.
- B. Outline the criteria and process that will be used to select the school's leader and the process by which the school leader will be evaluated.
- C. Provide a staffing plan for each year of the charter term aligned with the school's projected enrollment as detailed on the cover page of this application.
- D. Explain the school's plan for recruitment, selection, development, and evaluation of staff.

Evaluation Criteria: Management

Reviewers will look for:

- A management structure that includes clear delineation of roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school.
- A sound plan for the recruitment, selection and evaluation of the school leader.
- A viable and adequate staffing plan.
- A sound plan for recruiting and retaining qualified and capable staff.

Section 11: Education Service Providers

If the school intends to enter into a contract with an Education Service Provider (ESP)²:

- A. Describe the services to be provided by the ESP.
- B. Provide a draft of the proposed contract between the school and the ESP including, at a minimum, proposed services, performance evaluation measures, fee structure, renewal and termination provisions, and terms of property ownership (real, intellectual and personal).
- C. Explain why the ESP was selected, including what due diligence efforts were conducted to inform the selection and how the relationship with the ESP will further the school's mission.
- D. Explain the ESP's roles and responsibilities for the financial management of the proposed charter school, if applicable, and the internal controls that will be in place to guide this relationship.
- E. Explain how the governing board will ensure that an "arm's length," performance-based relationship exists between the governing board and the ESP.
- F. Provide a summary of the ESP's history, including its educational philosophy and background and experience of senior management.
- G. Provide a list of other schools with which the ESP has contracts, including contact information and student and financial performance data of such schools.

² An Education Service Provider (ESP) is an organization that provides comprehensive services to a school.

Organized as non-profit or for-profit companies, ESPs generally fall into two categories:

- *Educational Management Organizations* (EMOs) that provide comprehensive school management services and may provide school designs and/or educational programming as well, and
- *Comprehensive School Design Providers* that offer a replicable school model or common pedagogical, instructional and governance approach.

Evaluation Criteria: Education Service Providers

Reviewers will look for:

- A persuasive explanation of the reasons for contracting with an education service provider.
- A persuasive explanation of how the proposed relationship with the ESP will further the school's mission.
- A clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP.
- A clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school's governing board and the ESP.
- A clearly defined performance-based relationship between the school's board and ESP.

Section 12: Human Resources and Employment

- A. Explain the school's compensation plan, including whether staff will be publicly or privately employed.
- B. Describe the personnel policies and procedures to which staff will be required to adhere, including expectations for participation in the school's professional development program. If personnel policies and procedures have not been developed provide a clear plan, including timeline, for the development and approval by governing board.

Evaluation Criteria: Human Resources and Employment

Reviewers will look for:

- A compensation plan that will attract and retain quality staff.
- Policies and procedures that hold staff to high professional standards or a plan to develop policies and procedures.

Section 13: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

- A. Describe the plan for recruiting students, including strategies for reaching the school's targeted populations and those that might otherwise not have easy access to information on available educational options.
- B. Explain how the school will achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves or with the racial/ethnic range of other local public schools.
- C. Describe the school's enrollment policies and procedures, including an explanation of the enrollment timeline, criteria and/or any preferences for enrollment, and lottery process.

- D. Explain any student and/or family contracts that will be used as a requisite for initial and continued enrollment in the school. Describe if and how the school will enforce such contracts.
- E. Explain any other efforts to encourage parental and community involvement, if applicable.

Evaluation Criteria: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Reviewers will look for:

- A student recruitment plan that will enable the school to attract its targeted population.
- An enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair, and in accordance with applicable law.

III. BUSINESS PLAN

Section 14: Facilities

If the site is acquired:

- A. Describe the proposed facility, including location, size and layout of space.
- B. Describe the actions that will be taken to ensure the facility is in compliance with applicable laws, regulations and policies and is ready for the school's opening.
- C. Describe how the facility will meet the school's capacity needs for students to be served.
- D. Explain the anticipated costs for the facility, including renovation, rent, utilities and maintenance. Identify, if applicable, any funding sources (other than state and local funding) that will be applied to facilities-related costs.
- *The financial plan for the proposed school should align with the facilities-related costs described.*
- E. Describe the back-up facilities plan.
- *What is the alternate plan for facilities if the proposed facility is not available or is determined to be inappropriate for the school's opening?*

If the site is not acquired:

- F. Explain the school's facility needs, including desired location, size, and layout of space.
- G. Provide an estimate of the costs of the anticipated facility needs and describe how such estimates have been derived.

- *The financial plan for the proposed school should align with the facilities-related costs described.*
- H. Explain the strategy and schedule that will be employed to secure an adequate facility.
- I. Describe the back-up facilities plan.
- J. Describe the plan and methods the school will employ to comply with Florida's constitutional class size requirements.

Evaluation Criteria: Facilities

Reviewers will look for:

- A realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program and targeted population.
- Evidence that the school has the necessary resources to fund the facilities plan.

Section 15: Transportation Service

- A. Describe the school's plan for transportation, including any plans for contracting services. Your plan should discuss, to the greatest extent possible, the issues relevant to the school's transportation plans.³

Evaluation Criteria: Transportation

Reviewers will look for:

- A transportation plan that serves all eligible students and specifies in sufficient detail the responsibilities of all parties (the sponsor, the charter school, and other applicable service providers).

Section 16: Food Service

- A. Describe the school's plan for food services, including any plans for contracting services or plans to participate in the National School Lunch Program.

³ The charter school and the sponsor shall cooperate in making arrangements that ensure that transportation is not a barrier to equal access for all students residing within a reasonable distance of the charter school as determined in its charter. (Section 1002.33(20)(c), Florida Statutes)

Evaluation Criteria: Food Service

Reviewers will look for:

- A food service plan that will serve all students.

Section 17: Budget

- Provide an operating budget covering each year of the requested charter term that contains revenue projections, expenses and anticipated fund balances. The budget should be based on the projected student enrollment indicated on the cover page of the application.
- Provide a start-up budget (i.e., from the date on which the application is approved to the beginning of the first fiscal year of operation) that contains a balance sheet revenue projections, expenses and anticipated fund balance.
- Provide a detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating and start-up budget are based.
The budget narrative should provide sufficient information to fully understand how budgetary figures were determined.
- Explain the school's spending priorities.
- Provide monthly cash flow projections for the school's start-up period (i.e. from the date on which the application is approved to the beginning of the first fiscal year of operation) through the first year of operation.
- Describe the school's fundraising plan. Report on the current status of any fundraising efforts, including verification of any fundraising monies reported in the school's start-up or operating budgets.

Evaluation Criteria: Budget

Reviewers will look for:

- Budgetary projections which are consistent with all parts of the application, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing plan and facility.
- A realistic assessment of projected sources of revenue and expenses that ensure the financial viability of the school.

Section 18: Financial Management and Oversight

- Describe who will manage the school's finances and how the school will ensure financial resources are properly managed.

- B. Describe the financial controls, including an annual audit and regular board review of financial statements, which will be employed to safeguard finances.
- C. Describe the method by which accounting records will be maintained.
- D. Describe how the school will store student and financial records.
- E. Describe the insurance coverage the school will obtain, including applicable health, workers compensation, general liability, property insurance and directors and officers liability coverage.

Evaluation Criteria: Financial Management and Oversight

Reviewers will look for:

- A clear description of how the school's finances will be managed. The description must include assurances that the governing board retains ultimate control over the school's finances.
- A clear description of strong internal controls. The system of internal controls must be sufficient to safeguard finances.

Section 19: Action Plan

- A. Present a timetable for the school's start-up.

Evaluation Criteria: Action Plan

Reviewers will look for an action plan that:

- Provides a thoughtful and realistic implementation plan that covers major operational items and provides flexibility for addressing unanticipated events.

IV. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the application for a charter school.

As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a charter for _____ is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that, if awarded a charter, the school:

- Will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and operations.
- Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case students will be admitted through a random selection process.
- Will adhere to the antidiscrimination provisions of section 1000.05, F.S.
- Will adhere to all applicable provision of state and federal law relating to the education of students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.
- Will participate in the statewide assessment program created under section 1008.22, F.S.
- Will comply with Florida statutes relating to public records and public meetings, including Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and section 286.011, F.S., which are applicable to applicants even prior to being granted a charter.
- Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses and certifications related to fire, health and safety within the building and on school property.
- Will provide for an annual financial audit in accordance with section 218.39, F.S.

The governing board, at its discretion, allows _____ (name), _____ (title) to sign as the legal correspondent for the school.

Signature

Date

Printed Name