

**MODEL FLORIDA VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL
APPLICATION – IEPC-V1**

**Rule 6A-6.0786
June 2012**

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: _____

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

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 Approved Virtual Provider*: _____

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.

* Applicant must include executed contract with an Approved Virtual Provider

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 the optional purposes of charter schools found in section 1002.33(2)(c), F.S. This section is optional.
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.

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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, and the total number of students enrolled.
- C. Provide the projection for the percentage and number of students who will qualify for free equipment pursuant to section 1002.45(3)(d), Florida Statutes.
- D. Provide a description of how the student population projections were developed.

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. Explain how the educational program aligns with the school's mission.
- B. Describe the process the school will use to ensure that students eligible to receive a computer, monitor, printer (if necessary) and/or internet access, pursuant to Section 1002.45(3)(d), Florida Statutes, receive such equipment and internet service, and how the school will provide, track, and retrieve the necessary equipment (this information should be reflected in the budget section as well).

If the school intends to replicate an existing school design¹:

- C. 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.

- D. 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.

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).

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.

Evaluation Criteria: Educational Program Design

Reviewers will look for an educational program design that:

- Aligns with the school's mission and responds to the needs of the school's target population.
- Reflects a process that reasonably ensures compliance with Section 1002.45(3)(d), Florida Statutes.

Section 4: Curriculum Plan

- A. Provide evidence that reading is a primary focus of the school.
- B. Explain how students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.
- C. Describe proposed curriculum areas to be included other than the core academic areas.
- D. Describe how the effectiveness of the curriculum will be evaluated.

Evaluation Criteria: Curriculum Plan

Reviewers will look for a curriculum plan that:

- Ensures that reading is a primary focus of the school;
- 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, including any procedures regarding acceleration.
- C. If the school will serve high school students, *describe the methods used to determine if a student has satisfied the requirements specified in section 1003.428, 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.
- H. Provide a description for how the charter school will conduct state testing, including:

- Identification and training of test-administrators
- Test security measures
- Plans for identifying and securing testing locations

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.
- 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 needs of exceptional students will be met, to the maximum extent appropriate, including the provision 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. Explain how exceptional students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.
- 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.

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. Describe how the needs of English Language Learners will be met.
- C. Explain how English Language Learners who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.

Evaluation Criteria: English Language Learners

Reviewers will look for:

- Demonstrated understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education 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 during synchronous sessions, and any face to face events, and student discipline.
- B. Describe the school's Code of Conduct, including the school's proposed policies for discipline, suspension, and dismissal. The Code of Conduct must be appropriate for the virtual environment and must address cyber-bullying.

Evaluation Criteria: School Climate and Discipline

Reviewers will look for:

- A sound approach to classroom management and student discipline that is appropriate for online learning.
- Legally sound proposed policies for student discipline, suspension, and dismissal, including the school's code of conduct.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

Section 9: Governance

- A. Describe how the 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 how the governing board will fulfill its responsibilities and obligations, including but not limited to:
 - o Adoption of the annual budget
 - o Continuing oversight over charter school operations
- D. Describe the proposed 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. If the Board has not yet developed policies, the applicant shall describe the timeline for development and approval of Board policies.

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. (This question is not applicable if the applicant is an established 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.
- 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, and development 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 and selection 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 that is separate from the Approved Virtual Provider:

- 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. Unless the ESP is the parent non-profit organization, 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. Unless the ESP is the parent non-profit organization, explain how the governing board will ensure that an "arm's length," performance-based relationship exists between the governing board and the ESP.

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.

- 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.

If the school will not utilize the services of an Education Service Provider separate from the Approved Virtual Provider:

- A. Provide a copy of the executed contract with the Approved Virtual Provider. The contract must align with the explanations and descriptions contained within this application and must comply with applicable law.

**Evaluation Criteria: Education Service Providers
Separate from Approved Virtual Provider**

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 proposed 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.
- Proposed 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 proposed 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: Budget

- A. 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.
- B. Provide a start-up budget that contains a balance sheet, revenue projections, including source of revenues, expenses, and anticipated fund balance. The start-up budget must cover any period prior to the beginning of FTE payments in which the school will expend funds on activities necessary for the successful start-up of the school.
- C. Provide a detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating and start-up budget are based, including the projected completion rate of students. The narrative should include a description of how the governing board will monitor student completion rate and make any budgetary adjustments necessary to address mid-year adjustments to FTE payments.
The budget narrative should provide sufficient information to fully understand how budgetary figures were determined.
- D. Explain how the governing board will monitor budget, including a strategy for addressing revenue shortfalls due to lower than expected enrollment.
- E. Provide monthly cash flow projections for the school's start-up period through the first year of operation.

- F. Describe the school's fundraising plan, if applicable. 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, but not limited to the school's mission, educational program, and staffing plan.
- A realistic assessment of projected sources of revenue and expenses that ensure the financial viability of the school.
- A sound plan to monitor the budget and make adjustments as necessary.

Section 15: Financial Management and Oversight

- A. 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 16: Action Plan

- A. Present a projected timetable for the school's start-up, including but not limited to the following key activities:
- i. Recruiting and hiring staff
 - ii. Staff training
 - iii. Governing Board training

- iv. Policy Adoption by Board (if necessary)
- v. Lottery, if necessary
- vi. Student enrollment

The activities included should align with the start-up budget described earlier in the application. If an activity will be paid for by a source of funding not included in the start-up budget, it should be clearly indicated. (This timetable is a projection and is not meant to be binding on the school or sponsor)

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 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