

**STANDARD APPLICATION TO SPONSOR CHARTER SCHOOLS
FOR FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITIES AND FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM
INSTITUTIONS**

INTRODUCTION

Charter schools in Florida are public schools that operate under a performance-based contract, or a “charter,” with a sponsor. That sponsor is responsible for the approval or denial of charter applications, and with the execution of charter agreements with public charter schools. Further, a sponsor must ensure that the public charter school is compliant with the terms of the charter agreement and with applicable law and rules.

Charter school sponsors in Florida include school districts as well as Florida College System institutions and state universities. Pursuant to section 1002.33(5)(a)3.b., F.S., a college or university that wants to serve as a charter school sponsor must do so with the approval of the Florida Department of Education (Department). The standard application template here serves as the instrument that a college or university would submit to the Department.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The sponsor application process and timeline will include the following steps and corresponding timeline. Note that the applicant and the Department can mutually agree to modify this timeline.

Application Steps	Timeline
Intent to Apply Submitted to Department (Optional)	Submitted by applicant at any time
Applicant Information Session (Optional)	Scheduled by Department after submission of the Intent to Apply; information session to orient applicant to the application process.
Applicant Interview and Notice of Deficiencies	Within 45 days of receipt of the application, the Department will schedule an interview with the applicant and notify the applicant of any missing information and seek clarification of information needed to approve the application.
Response to Deficiencies or Supplemental Information	The applicant shall have a minimum of 20 days to provide to the Department missing or supplemental information, or to correct deficiencies.
Approval or Denial of Sponsor Application (if applicable)	Fifteen (15) business days from the interview or receipt of Response to Deficiencies, whichever occurs later.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The application is divided into three sections:

1. Sponsor Vision and Goals;
2. Sponsor Capacity and Infrastructure; and
3. Sponsor Processes and Decision-Making.

For each section, provide a narrative response to the questions listed below. Label each section and include each question before your narrative response. If the question requires additional information in the form of an attachment, please include such attachments (labeled by number) at the end of your application. Only include the requested and relevant information in the attachments.

Please do not restate information multiple times within the application and attachments. Include specific cross references to other sections of the application or attachments, as needed.

SECTION 1: SPONSOR VISION AND GOALS

- A. What is your vision for sponsoring charter schools and how does it align with the goals of [Florida's charter school law](#)?
- B. What will be your priorities for sponsoring charter schools?

Evaluation Criteria: *Department reviewers will look for a clear and compelling vision from the applicant, along with priorities that are aligned with the guiding principles of the charter school law (s. 1002.33, F.S.) which include the following:*

- *High standards of student achievement;*
- *Flexibility and autonomy for charter schools aligned with responsibility and accountability; and*
- *Providing parents with the flexibility to choose among diverse educational opportunities.*

SECTION 2: SPONSOR CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- A. What infrastructure have you or will you put in place to effectively oversee the charter schools you sponsor? How will you fulfill the statutory responsibilities of a charter school sponsor and local educational agency (LEA) under Florida law? In describing this infrastructure, include the positions allocated to sponsorship duties, the qualifications for those positions, the amount of time each position will devote to sponsorship duties, and brief job descriptions for each position. Include both employees and any proposed third parties or independent contractors.
 - a. As Attachment 1, submit a corresponding organizational chart of the sponsorship personnel that includes the reporting structure to the college or university's board of trustees.
 - b. As Attachment 2, submit resumes for existing sponsorship personnel.

- B. What is your plan for building the knowledge and skill base of your sponsorship leadership and staff through training and professional development?

- C. One critical component of being a charter school sponsor in Florida is serving as the LEA for the charter schools you oversee. Complete the chart below, which includes some of key responsibilities of an LEA for the charter schools it oversees. This list is not exhaustive, but includes important LEA responsibilities. Another critical component is for a sponsor to provide administrative and education services to charter schools, as set forth in section 1002.33(20), F.S., and to support and monitor charter schools to ensure sponsored schools comply with the statutes set forth in section 1002.33(16), F.S., along with associated rules.

LEA or Sponsor Responsibility	Responsible Personnel (by position title)	Existing Systems and Experience/Expertise	To be Developed Systems and Experience/Expertise
Reporting of all student and staff data, including enrollment, graduation rates, and teacher certification.			
Payment of all federal, state, and local funding for which charter schools are eligible.			
Compliance with federal programs, including Title I, Title II, IDEA and Perkins.			
School safety compliance, including the designation of a school safety specialist pursuant to s. 1006.07(6), F.S.			

<p>The administration of the statewide assessment program created under s. 1008.22, F.S.</p>			
<p>Reporting educator misconduct under s. 1012.796, F.S.</p>			

- D. As a college or university sponsor, your board of trustees will serve as the ultimate decision-maker. Describe the role your board of trustees will play in making high-stakes decisions and how information will be shared with them to inform this decision-making. What steps will you take to ensure your board members understand and are prepared to fulfill their role as a charter school sponsor?
- E. As Attachment 3, submit a detailed start-up plan that shows the key tasks to be completed between approval as a charter school sponsor and the opening of the first charter school. Include responsible individuals and timelines for each task.
- F. Charter school sponsors receive an administrative fee that is based upon the size of the school's student population. However, sponsors only receive this fee once a school is open. What are your anticipated costs related to charter school sponsorship-related activities and personnel over the next two years? What is your plan for funding these activities? In describing your anticipated costs and funding plan, please note the assumptions you are making. Additionally, if you sponsor a school before it receives an appropriation pursuant to section 1002.33(17)(b)2.a., F.S., how do you plan to sponsor and support the school?

Evaluation criteria: Department reviewers will look for a commitment to charter school sponsorship by assessing:

- *The degree to which the applicant has dedicated personnel to the task of charter school sponsoring;*
- *A reporting structure that closely links decision-making and recommendations on authorizing to college or university leadership;*
- *Professional development activities for charter school sponsor staff that align with and support the vision and goals in Section 1;*
- *A clear understanding of LEA and sponsor requirements as well as the personnel and systems necessary to carry out those requirements;*
- *A thoughtful and realistic sponsor implementation plan that covers key operational needs and provides flexibility for addressing unanticipated events; and*
- *Evidence that the applicant has the necessary resources to fund its sponsorship activities and can address unanticipated costs.*

SECTION 3: SPONSOR PROCESSES AND DECISION-MAKING

- A. What is your process for soliciting, reviewing, and approving charter school applications? In outlining this process, describe your review and decision-making process, including who will be reviewing the applications and how decisions will be made. Include a detailed sample timeline from application submission to the ultimate decision to grant or deny the charter.
- B. What is your plan for ongoing oversight of your charter schools? Specifically, how will you hold charter schools to account for the academic, financial and operational proposals they have put forward in their charter school application? How will you monitor their compliance with applicable with state law, particularly those laws that pertain to students with disabilities and school safety?
- C. What role will site visits play in your plan for ongoing oversight of your charter schools? Describe the type, purpose, and frequency of these visits. How will you ensure the site visits respect school autonomy and avoid school operational interference?
- D. What steps will you take if a school is not meeting performance expectations or is not in compliance with the terms of its charter contract?
- E. When and how will you communicate performance information to your schools? How will you ensure that this information is transparent and timely received?

Evaluation criteria: *Department reviewers will look for clear and comprehensive processes from the applicant to:*

- *Solicit, review, and approve charter school applications;*
- *Monitor and oversee the charter schools the applicant would approve; and*
- *Make high-stakes decisions when a charter school fails to meet performance expectations.*

Statement of Assurances

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

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application from _____ (sponsoring entity) is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

In addition to meeting the performance criteria set forth in Section 1-3 of this application, in order to be approved as a charter school sponsor, an applicant must agree to the following assurances:

- The charter school sponsor will require all of the charter schools it sponsors to be in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and State Board of Education rules, including, but not limited to, provisions identified in section 1002.33(16), F.S.
- The charter school sponsor will adhere to the sponsor duties outlined in section 1002.33(5), F.S.

- The charter school sponsor will adhere to the timelines that govern the approval of charter school application and the execution of charter agreements under sections 1002.33(6)-(7), F.S.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will adhere to the antidiscrimination provisions of section 1000.05, F.S.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will adhere to all applicable provisions of state and federal law relating to employment and accessibility of persons with disabilities, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will adhere to all applicable provisions 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.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors 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.
- The charter school sponsor will perform the duties of a local educational agency (LEA) and a charter school sponsor, including the following:
 - The reporting of all student and staff data to the Department, including enrollment, graduation rates, and teacher certification;
 - The administration of the statewide assessment program created under section 1008.22, F.S.;
 - The payment of all state and federal funding for which the charter schools it sponsors are eligible, pursuant to section 1002.33, F.S. Federal funds include, but are not limited to, Title I, Title II, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds;
 - The fulfillment of all requirements for all LEAs and schools that participate in federal programs, such as Title I, Title II, and IDEA, including all reporting requirements;
 - The fulfillment of all requirements under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
 - Ensuring services are provided to English Language Learners, as set forth in s. 1003.56, F.S., and associated rules;
 - The establishment of an accounting system to track revenue and expenditures by fund and grant, and a cost-allocation system for program cost reporting;
 - The implementation of the Teacher Salary Increase Allocation under s. 1011.62(16), F.S.; and
 - The submission of Master School Identification Applications (MSIDs) for each charter school in accordance with the requirements of Rule 6A-1.0016, F.A.C.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will comply with the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, including the following statutes pertaining to school safety: ss. 943.082(4)(b), 1006.07(6)(c), 1006.07(7), 1006.07(9), 1006.12, 1006.1493, and 1012.584, F.S.

- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will comply with the School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting Rule 6A-1.0017, F.A.C., and the School Safety Requirements and Monitoring Rule 6A-1.0018, F.A.C.
- The charter school sponsor will participate in the technical assistance the Department provides to facilitate the sponsor’s compliance with applicable, laws, rules, and LEA requirements, including those identified in this statement of assurances.
- The charter school sponsor will comply with Florida Statutes relating to public records and public meetings, including chapter 119, F.S., and section 286.011, F.S., and will ensure that the charter schools it sponsors will comply with these laws as well.
- The charter school sponsor will require that all of the schools it sponsors will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building and on school property.

The Board of Trustees allows _____ (name), _____(title) to sign as its duly authorized representative.

Signature

Date

Printed Name