



School District of Manatee County Charter Application Guidelines 2023-2024

APPLICATIONS

Final applications are submitted using the **September 2023 FLDOE Model Charter School Application** no later than 4:00 p.m. on a pre-arranged date and time. The application submission date and time is to be mutually agreed upon by the applicant and Charter School Coordinator.

Five paper copies in three ring binders, marked with consecutive page numbers, with labeled tabs separating each Section within the application narrative. The Chart of Attachments and Addendums are to be separated with tabs marked for each section. Applications with strike throughs, or out of order pages, smudge marks – will be returned to the applicant with 7 days to correct non-substantive errors.

One USB continuous electronic document identical to the print copy is also required for submission.

All applications must be complete and meet all application submission requirements. Other than what is permitted by state statute, no additions to the application will be allowed. Please carefully review additional application format requirements below:
<http://www.fl DOE.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-resources/new-applicant/>.

All applications must be delivered to:
School District of Manatee County
Dr. Valerie Moore Hyer
Coordinator of Charter Schools
2501 63rd Avenue East
Bradenton, Florida 34203
941.751.6550 x 43202

In order to effectively and efficiently review the application, please ensure that all applications are complete and properly formatted with the following formatting requirements:

- ✚ The application must be **PAGINATED sequentially** throughout the entire document.
 - ✚ All pages must be **SINGLE SIDED, SINGLE SPACED, IN 12 POINT FONT, WITH 1 INCH MARGINS** (This includes all margins: left, right, bottom and top).
 - ✚ All pages must be clean, with no strike throughs, white out, or other smudge marks.
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- **A total of five (5) copies** of the application are to be submitted along with **one electronic copy on a USB as one continuous document, identical to the paper copies**.
 - Each copy of the application must be contained in a three-ring binder. The name of the school must be clearly identified on the cover and on the side with the spine labeled.
 - The application must have all sections tabbed and labeled, along with a table of contents, and meet all the requirements in the new model application.
 - Background Security Affidavits (with original signatures) for each founder and founding board member are required.



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- One electronic copy of the application must be submitted on a USB as one continuous document (no separate files) as a PDF file.
- The usb electronic file must be the identical documents, in the same order, and same format as those submitted in the hardcopy.

Please note: Individuals and groups seeking the right and responsibility to educate public school children at public expense should be accountable to the highest standards of academic integrity.

Plagiarism, including the copying of language from substantive portions of any other charter application or from any district's policies and procedures without proper attribution or authorization, is prohibited and will be reason for immediate denial.

In order to implement an existing curriculum, instructional framework, or educational model (i.e., Montessori, arts integration, project-based learning, blended learning, etc.) with fidelity, key concepts must be discussed. However, it is not acceptable to copy and paste this discussion or description from another source. Existing operators or applicants with their own previously submitted applications may use their own intellectual property without violating this provision.

A high-quality applicant team with the capacity to operate a high-quality school must be able to thoughtfully explain in their own words how they intend to educate children.

CHARTER APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

The School District of Manatee County shall receive and review all timely, complete applications using the 2022 Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument developed by FLDOE. The Board shall evaluate all timely, complete applications during the evaluation process.

Applications cannot be amended, and missing documentation and unsolicited information will not be accepted or considered. However, as required by law, the Board shall allow the applicant, upon receipt of written notification, seven (7) calendar days to make technical or non-substantive corrections and clarifications, which include corrections of grammatical, typographical, pagination, and like errors.

The Board will review only one (1) Final application as per Florida Statute. The Board shall not review multiple "Final" applications during an application review cycle.

The Board shall deny any application that does not comply with the statutory requirements and/or Board's instructions for charter school applications.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Board may solicit additional information regarding the history and background of individual applicants and/or founding/governing boards and its individual members including, but not limited to a demonstration of the professional experience or competence of those individuals or organizations applying to operate the charter school or those hired or retained to perform professional services; and the description of



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clearly delineated responsibilities and the policies and practices needed to effectively manage the charter school.

A description of internal audit procedures and establishment of controls to ensure that the financial resources are properly managed must be included. This information may be used to evaluate the applicant's ability to operate a charter school.

The Board may solicit additional information during the review and evaluation of the charter school application such as whether the applicant currently operates charter schools in Florida and if the proposed school will be a replication of an existing school design. This information may be used to evaluate the applicant's ability to operate a charter school.

The Board may solicit additional evidence of prior experience in establishing and operating public charter schools. Evidence of prior experience and success in establishing and operating charter schools shall be weighed in making a determination to recommend approval or denial of an application.

CHARTER APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM

The purpose of this team is to identify strengths, and deficiencies in the written application and/or areas that require clarification to fully evaluate the quality of the application or the capacity of the group to properly implement the proposed plan.

The Charter Application Review Team shall be comprised of the Superintendent's leadership team, which may include department directors and/or other respective designees, and other representatives deemed appropriate by the District.

Capacity Interview

Applicants may be notified and given the opportunity to attend a capacity interview to clarify their application. The applicant will be required to have at least one (1) governing board member present. The Charter Application Review Team may, at its sole discretion, evaluate the application without any additional input from the applicant if at least one (1) governing board member of the charter school is not available.

For all Charter Applicants invited by the School District of Manatee County to participate in a Capacity Interview, the following requirements apply:

- The School District of Manatee County Charter Schools Office will reach out to the Charter Applicant to schedule the Capacity Interview at a mutually agreeable time.
- All capacity interviews are face-to-face, in person only, and will take place at the Professional Support Center, 2501 63rd Avenue East, Bradenton, FL.
- Zoom, TEAMS and other online platforms will not be permitted for any persons involved in the Capacity Interview.
- Charter Applicants and their Capacity Interview Attendees will not receive any questions ahead of time.



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- A copy of each question will be made available for the applicant team member responding to the question during the Capacity Interview only.
- Every Capacity Interview shall be recorded by the School District of Manatee County and will be transcribed in writing.
- Applicants may request a copy of the transcription of the Capacity Interview.
- Information from the Capacity Interview will be utilized as part of the Evaluation of the Charter Application.

The Charter Application Review Team shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent to approve or deny each application.

All applications will be submitted to the Board by the Superintendent with a recommendation for approval or denial. The Board will, by a majority vote, approve or deny the application no later than ninety (90) calendar days after the application is received, unless the applicant and the Board mutually agree, in writing, to postpone the vote to a specific date, at which time the Board shall approve or deny the application.

An application submitted by a high-performing charter school that has satisfied the requirements set forth in State law for such designation may be denied by the Board only if the Superintendent demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the application failed to meet one (1) or more of the criteria set forth in F.S. 1002.33(6)(b)(3)(b):

The application does not materially comply with the requirements set forth in F.S. 1002.33(3)(a);

The charter school proposed in the application does not materially comply with the requirements in F.S. 1002.33(9);

The proposed charter school's educational program does not substantially replicate that of the applicant's high-performing charter school;

The applicant has made a material misrepresentation or false statement or concealed an essential or material fact during the application process; or

The proposed charter school's educational program and financial management practices do not materially comply with the requirements of F.S. 1002.33.

If the Board denies an application submitted by a high-performing charter school, the specific reasons, based upon the criteria set forth in F.S. 1002.33(3)(b), for the denial shall be provided in writing to the applicant and FLDOE within ten (10) calendar days after such denial.