



School District of Manatee County Charter Application Guidelines 2021-2022

Charter Application

Final applications must be submitted using the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Model Charter School Application form **on or before Tuesday, February 1, 2022** at 4:00 pm. Fifteen copies in three ring binders and one USB electronic copy are 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. <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-resources/new-applicant/>. Please carefully review additional application format requirements below.

All applications must be delivered to:

School District of Manatee County – District Support Department
2501 63rd Avenue East
Bradenton, Florida 34203

Charter Application Format

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.
- One (1) original hard copy and 15 copies of the application are to be submitted.
 - ~ 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 with a table of contents, and meet all of the requirements in the new model application.
 - ~ Background Security Affidavits (with original signatures) for each founder and founding board member. Please Note: This item is not required for DRAFT applications, but will be required for the final February 1st submission.
- One electronic copy of the application must be submitted on a USB as one continuous document (no separate files) and in a Word file. PDF only accepted for attachments.
 - ~ Important: The documents in the electronic file must be the same 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 (e.g. 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. 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. Existing operators or applicants with their own previously submitted applications may use their own intellectual property without violating this provision.

Charter Application Review Process

- The District shall receive and review all timely, complete applications using the evaluation instrument developed by FLDOE.
- The Board shall evaluate all timely, complete applications during the evaluation process. 1) Applications cannot be amended and 2) 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, and like errors or to add missing signatures, if such errors are identified as cause to deny the application.
- 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 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.

Applicants may be notified and given the opportunity to attend a capacity interview to clarify their application. In this situation 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.

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):

1. The application does not materially comply with the requirements set forth in F.S. 1002.33(3)(a);
2. The charter school proposed in the application does not materially comply with the requirements in F.S. 1002.33(9);
3. The proposed charter school's educational program does not substantially replicate that of the applicant's high-performing charter school;
4. The applicant has made a material misrepresentation or false statement or concealed an essential or material fact during the application process; or
5. 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.