

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION REVIEW GUIDE (START-UP SCHOOLS)

Name of Proposed School: _____

Grades: _____

I. PROGRAM

(A) MISSION STATEMENT

The charter school application must include a mission statement that must be clear and must support the intent of the Charter School Act:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Is the purpose of the charter school clearly stated? (includes at least one) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) improve student learning, • (b) increase learning opportunities for students, • (c) encourage the use of a variety of productive teaching methods, • (d) establish new forms of accountability for schools, • (e) create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site, • (f) and assist South Carolina in reaching academic excellence. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Is the purpose of the charter school consistent with the intent of the Charter Schools Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(B) EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS, AND CURRICULUM

The charter school's educational program, goals, objectives, pupil achievement standards, and curriculum must be clearly described in the application and must meet or exceed any student academic standards adopted by the school district in which the charter school is located. The application must demonstrate that the educational program is designed to enable each student to achieve these standards:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Is the student population identified by: grade level, unique educational needs, and projected enrollment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Is an educational program, including the curriculum to be used, clearly described?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
3. Are the goals and objectives clearly stated and in enough detail to indicate specific outcomes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Do the educational goals reflect the school's mission statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Does the application include strategies to accomplish the educational goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Do academic standards identify what students will achieve at each grade level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Do academic standards meet or exceed the South Carolina curriculum standards, as adopted by the State Board of Education?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Is a correlation or other documentation included to ensure that the school will provide an instructional program that meets or exceeds the academic standards? OR Is a process identified to ensure that the school will provide an instructional program that meets or exceeds the academic standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Do the school calendar and daily schedule include at least 180 instructional days of six hours each?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. If the charter school plans to offer the South Carolina State High School Diploma, does the application describe the method for meeting the diploma requirements, including course unit requirements, seat time for Carnegie Units, and passage of the required examination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Are provisions included for determining if all students are achieving the standards, including the methods by which student performance information will be gathered and monitored?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Does the application include an explanation as to how the school will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing the following information:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The school's procedure for identifying students with special needs, developing individualized education programs, and providing related and transition services? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The application must include a description of the charter school's plan for evaluating pupil achievement and progress toward accomplishment of the school's achievement standards. The school's evaluation plan must include state-mandated assessments and other assessments as well as the timeline for meeting these standards and the procedures to be taken if pupil achievement falls below the standards:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the application specify methods for evaluating pupil achievement at each grade level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Do the evaluation methods include the state assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the application include a timeline that identifies the expected yearly progress toward meeting the charter school's long-term performance goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the expected yearly progress meet or exceed the adequate yearly progress as established in the No Child Left Behind Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Are provisions included to address the needs of students who do not perform at acceptable levels of proficiency in the statewide assessment program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

II. PERSONNEL

(A) ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING STAFF

The charter school must employ administrators and teachers in a manner consistent with the Charter Schools Act:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Will at least one member of the administrative staff hold current South Carolina certification in administration or have at least one year of experience in the field of school-based administration?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Will at least 75 percent of the teachers be certified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Will each teacher of a core academic area (English/language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies) either be certified in that area or hold a baccalaureate or graduate degree in that subject? (Teachers with elementary certification may teach in any academic area and in any grades allowable by the status of their certification.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the application include provisions for special education teachers to be certified in each of the areas of disability for students needing special education?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Will each noncertified teacher:			

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
• (a) Be appropriately qualified for the subject matter taught?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (b) Have completed at least one year at an accredited college or university?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (c) Meet the qualifications outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-115?			

(B) EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The application must explain the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees, including evaluation procedures:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the application include a description of the process that will be used to advertise for, select, and employ instructional staff and other employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the application outline the procedure for the evaluation of teachers of the charter school? The school selected to comply fully with ADEPT and explained in adequate detail, OR The school selected another evaluation method and explained in adequate detail.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the application explain how the school will address its employment policies with affected employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(C) GRIEVANCE AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

The charter school must have a reasonable grievance and termination procedure for its employees:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Did the charter school, with agreement from the sponsor, adopt the procedures for the employment and dismissal of teachers outlined in S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410 <i>et seq.</i> (1990)? OR Did the charter school establish employment and termination procedures that	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

provide for notice and a right to a hearing before the governing board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the charter school application include grievance or termination procedures for paraprofessionals and other staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

III. PLANS

(A) SUPPORT FOR FORMATION OF A CHARTER SCHOOL

The application must include evidence that an adequate number of parents, teachers, pupils, or any combination support the formation of the charter school:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the charter committee include at least one teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the application include documentation of support of parents, teachers, pupils, or any combination of them that demonstrates that the school would likely meet enrollment expectations? OR If the social situation of the proposed school's targeted population precludes establishing parental support, does evidence demonstrate support from community groups and agencies, including letters from these entities that specify the level of their commitment to the school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(B) BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

The application must include a plan for the charter school that is economically sound and in compliance with state and federal requirements, including a proposed budget for the term of the charter, and must describe the manner in which an annual audit will be conducted:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the budget provided in the application provide an economically sound financial plan for the term of the charter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the application include a budget for each year of the five-year term of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
the charter, using the same budget codes as are required of school districts?			
3. Is the budget based on documented SDE estimated revenues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. If the budget includes funds acquired through grants, does the application (1) present evidence that the funds, including federal public charter school start-up grant, are likely to be received and (2) explain the terms of the projected grants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Do anticipated expenditures include all costs associated with initial implementation and continued operation, including but not limited to instructional and support costs for salaries, employee benefits, purchased services (includes insurance and transportation), supplies and materials (includes noncapital equipment), and capital outlay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Does the application include a description of the annual audit of financial and administrative operations, including evidence that the charter school will adhere to the accounting, auditing, and reporting procedures and requirements that are applied to public schools operating in South Carolina as set forth in the <i>Single Audit Guide</i> , <i>Financial Accounting Handbook</i> , and <i>Funding Manual</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Does the application include documentation regarding the pupil accounting system, including evidence that the charter school will adhere to the procedures and regulations that are applied to public schools operating in SC as set forth in the <i>S.C. Pupil Accounting Manual</i> and the <i>S.C. Student Accountability Manual</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Does the application include documentation of any negotiated services to be provided by the school district, including but not limited to financial accounting, payroll services, food services, custodial services, maintenance, curriculum, library and media services, and warehousing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Does the application include documentation of any negotiated services provided by other vendors or agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(C) INSURANCE

The application must include a description of the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the charter school. The application must address, but is not limited to, the following types of insurance: worker’s compensation, property, indemnity, and automotive.

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
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Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the application include a description and a statement from a South Carolina licensed insurance company or the state insurance reserve fund setting out the charter school applicant's insurability and an estimate of the cost for the following types of insurance:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) Worker's Compensation? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (b) Liability Insurance? Does the minimum policy cover limits of the South Carolina Tort Claims Act? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (c) Property Insurance? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (d) Indemnity Insurance? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (e) Automobile Insurance, both property and liability? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(D) TRANSPORTATION

The application must include a description of how the charter school intends to meet the transportation needs of its pupils:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Will the charter school provide or facilitate transportation if the lack of transportation prevents a child from attending that school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. If the charter school will provide transportation by school bus, does the application include a plan that complies with the state requirements for drivers and training and the state safety requirements for school buses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. If the charter school intends to contract with the district or a third party for transportation services, does the application provide a description of those services and a proposed contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the application include provisions for students with special needs to be served in accordance with state and federal law?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(E) FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The application must include description of the building, facilities, and equipment and an explanation as to how they will be obtained:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
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Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
<p>1. If the application identifies a facility that the charter school intends to occupy, does the application provide the following information:</p> <p>(a) the address of the facility;</p> <p>(b) a description of the facility;</p> <p>(c) a floor plan of the facility, including a notation of its size in square footage;</p> <p>(d) the name and address of the owner of the facility;</p> <p>(e) a copy of the proposed lease or rental agreement if the facility will be lease or rented; and</p> <p>(f) documentation from the Office of School Facilities stating that the facility meets the appropriate codes, or evidence that the charter school committee is working with an architect and/or the Office of School Facilities to correct any deficiencies?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>2. If the application does not identify a facility that the charter school intends to occupy, does the application include a plan for obtaining such a facility, including</p> <p>(a) a description of the facility needs;</p> <p>(b) a statement as to whether an existing facility will be remodeled or a new facility will be build; and</p> <p>(c) a schedule for completing or obtaining a suitable facility? If applicable, does the application include a description of and timeline for any plan for completing or obtaining a facility?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>3. Does the application include: a description of the equipment that will be used to support the proposed curriculum; an explanation of how the equipment will be obtained?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

IV. PRACTICES

(A) GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

The application must include a description of the governance and operation of the charter school:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the application include: a copy of the non-profit corporation's articles of incorporation, bylaws, and proof of South Carolina non-profit corporation status?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Governing Board Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) Is the governing board elected annually? • (b) Are all employees of the charter school and all parents or guardians of enrolled students eligible to participate in the election? • (c) Are parents or guardians of a student given one vote for each student enrolled in the charter school? 	<div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="background-color: #cccccc; height: 15px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the governing board assume the following responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) employing and contracting with teachers and nonteaching employees; (b) ensuring that teachers, whether certified or noncertified, undergo the background checks and other investigations required for certified teachers, as provided by law, before they may teach in the charter school; (c) contracting for other services; (d) developing pay scales, performance criteria, and discharging policies for its employees; (e) deciding all other matters related to the operation of the charter school, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures; and (f) ensuring that the charter school will adhere to the same health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights requirements as are applied to all public schools operating in the same school district? 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is evidence provided that the charter school and its governing body will comply with the Freedom of Information Act?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Does the application include a description of the administrative structure of the charter school, including the roles and responsibilities of each administrative staff member?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
6. Does the application provide evidence of the nature and extent of parental, community, and professional educator involvement in the governance and operation of the school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(B) ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The application must include a description of the charter school's admission policies and procedures:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Do the admission policies and procedures provide that, subject to space limitations, the charter school will admit all children who are eligible to attend public school in the school district in which the charter school is operating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building, will the students be accepted by lot, as specified in federal or state guidance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Do the policies and procedures indicate that the charter school will not limit or deny admission or show preference to any individual group? (Priority may be given to a sibling of a pupil already enrolled, children of charter school employees, and children of the charter school committee. Children of the charter school committee who are given priority may not exceed 20 percent of the enrollment of the charter school.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Do the policies and procedures include provisions to grant or deny permission for students to attend the charter school if they reside in a school district other than the one in which the charter school is located?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. If the charter school plans to enroll out-of-district students,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (a) Will in-district students be given priority?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (b) Will the out-of-district student enrollment exceed 20 percent of the total enrollment of the charter school, only with the approval of the receiving district's board of trustees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (c) Will the sending district be notified immediately of the transferring students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• (d) Will the out-of-district students be considered on the basis of the order	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
in which their applications are received? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) Will the out-of-district student enrollment exceed 20 percent from one school district only with the approval of the sending district? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. If a charter school denies admission to a student for reasons other than the results of a lottery, does the school allow for the student to appeal the denial to the local school board of trustees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(C) RACIAL COMPOSITION

The application must describe how the charter school intends to ensure that the enrollment of the school is similar to the racial composition of the school district or to the targeted student population the charter school progress to serve and must also provide assurance that the school complies with any school district desegregation plan or order in effect:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the application demonstrate timely, fair, and realistic policies and procedures for recruiting, registering, and admitting students that reflect the racial composition of the school district or the targeted school population?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Do the proposed procedures and policies reflect an understanding of the racial composition of the district and the targeted student population?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the application demonstrate that the applicant requested and received a letter from the district indicating whether the school will be subject to any desegregation plan or order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. If the charter school will be subject to a desegregation plan or order, does the application demonstrate that the applicant:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Secured a copy of the desegregation plan or order and provide documentation that this step was taken in the application? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Determined and demonstrated that the charter school’s policies and procedures comply with the desegregation plan or order and provide documentation that this step was taken in the application? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Requested and received a letter from the district, indicating whether the 			

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
charter school's proposed policies and procedures are in compliance with any desegregation plan or order in effect in the district or whether clarification must be received from the Office for Civil Rights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(D) STUDENT CONDUCT, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The charter school application must include a policy governing student conduct, rights and responsibilities, and discipline standards and procedures:

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Will the charter school adopt the district's policy conduct and discipline? OR Does the application include a policy that sets forth clear expectations for student conduct and discipline?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the policy set forth disciplinary actions to be taken by the administration for breaches of the student conduct policy, including the suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the application set forth an appeal process for students recommended for expulsion that includes a right to appeal a decision to the charter school board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the application contain the explanation of the policies with regard to student conduct, rights, and responsibilities that will be given to parents and students at the beginning of the school year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(E) INDEMNIFICATION

Standard Components	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the charter school assume the liability for the activities of the charter school and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school district, its servants, agents, and employees from any and all liability, damage, expense, causes of action, suits, claims, or judgments arising from injury to persons or property or otherwise that arises out of the act, failure to act, or negligence of the charter school, its agents and employees, in connection with or arising out of the activity of the charter school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

