



# New Jersey Office of Charter Schools Spring 2013 Application Round

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# The Authorizing Process

The purpose is to improve the educational options available to children and families by...

Approving only strong, demonstrably viable applications

Renewing schools only if they meet or exceed performance expectations within the Performance Framework



# Application Characteristics

- Thorough application
  - Educational program
  - Organizational plan
  - Financial plan
- Rigorous approval criteria
- Capacity interviews
- External reviewers
- Sound evidence-based recommendations



# Application Timeline Phase One

- January 30, 2013                      Technical Assistance Training
- April 1, 2013, 4:15 PM              Phase One Application Due
- April 8, 2013, 4:15 PM              Receipts Due to NJDOE  
(County /District(s) of Residence)
- June 14, 2013                          Applicants notified of Qualified  
Applicant status and eligibility to  
move on to Phase Two application



## Application Timeline Phase Two

- July 12, 2013, 4:15 PM Phase Two Application Due/ For Qualified Applicants Only
- July 19, 2013 Receipts Due to NJDOE (County/District(s) of Residence)
- August 29 –September 9, 2013 Applicant Interview
- September 30, 2013 Charter Application Initial Approval
- June 30, 2014 School Preparedness Process Completed
- July 16, 2014 Final Granting of Charter



# Application Process

- Founders who are committed to educating students well and improving the lives of children and families in New Jersey
- Demonstrated understanding of the population that the school is likely to serve
- An educational program that is likely to be effective for the targeted student population
- Strong and diverse leadership and operational capacity
- Sound financial planning and management



## Quick Facts

- Charter School law is found at *N.J.S.A. 18A:36A*
- Charter School administrative code is found at *N.J.A.C. 6A:11*
- Charter School administrative code regarding fiscal operations is found at *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A (Chapters 15, 16 and 22)*
- Charter schools operate independently of district boards of education
- Charter schools are governed by their own board of trustees
- Charter schools can not discriminate in admissions based on academic, athletic ability, race, sex, creed, etc.
- All instructional staff must hold appropriate NJ certification
- Each school must employ a certified school business administrator
- Charter schools must make special education programs available to all eligible students



## Response to Questions

- Use the complete, proper name of the proposed charter school;
- Respond to every statement with a discrete response;
- Provide complete, concise responses to the statements immediately following the question; and
- Respond to each statement in the text of the application and not in the attachments, unless an attachment is explicitly requested;
- If a particular question does not apply to your team or application, simply respond “Not Applicable,” AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or application.
- **The page limit for Phase One is 20 pages. The page limit for Phase Two is 75 pages.** A thorough and quality response can be developed within those guidelines. Attachments and Exhibits are not included in the narrative page limit.

***Note: Failure to comply with formatting instructions may impact assessment.***



## Format

- Type the application on 8 ½ x 11 white paper;
- Use a twelve-point or larger font;
- Single-space the body of the application;
- 20 page limit (Phase One), 75 page limit (Phase Two);
- Use only **one side** of each sheet of paper. **Do not** copy front to back;
- Separate each section by inserting tabbed dividers in the application document; on each tabbed divider label, indicate the name of the specific section;
- In the header, include the complete, proper name of the charter school and section number and name of the section. (For example: Favorite Charter School, Section 1, Mission Statement);
- In the footer, include page numbers that reference the application section and page number. (For example: Page 1-1 represents Section 1, page 1); and
- Edit document for spelling, grammar, formatting and completeness prior to submission.



## Application Copies to the NJDOE

- **Submit and designate an original copy and three additional copies**
- **(Total of four copies to be submitted to the NJDOE);**
- Submit **ONE** electronic copy in PDF format on CD or flash drive to the NJDOE **(not via e-mail);**
- Submit the original application and **three** copies to the Department of Education in loose-leaf binders—**DO NOT STAPLE;**
- Insert a copy of the title page in the clear slip sheet of the cover, or attach a label to the cover with the required title page information;
- Label the side of the loose-leaf binder with the proposed name of the charter school;
- Submit a complete copy of each application;
- **Do not permanently bind the application.**



### Required Additional Copies, Pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:11-2.1(b)*

- If planning to operate with a district of residence, submit **one** copy to the district board(s) of education and/or superintendent of the state-operated school district(s) of the district of residence of the proposed charter school by the due date;
- If planning to operate with a region of residence, submit **one** copy of the application to each of the district boards of education and/or state district superintendent(s) that comprise the region by the due date;
- If planning to serve a district that has a sending/receiving relationship with another school district, the charter school application must be submitted to each receiving school district by the due date;
- Submit **one** copy to the respective executive county superintendent of schools. If operating within a region of residence that covers more than one county, submit **one** copy of the application to each executive county superintendent of schools by the due date;
- Applications not submitted **to all** districts/regions of residence by the due date are subject to immediate disqualification and **will not** be reviewed by the NJDOE; and
- Fax **or email copies of** application receipt(s) to the NJDOE within one week of the due date.



## Two Page Overview

- A descriptive summary of the essential components of the application



## Mission

- State the mission and vision of the proposed school



## Applicant and Founder Information

- Describe how the founding group represents the interests of the multiple stakeholders
- Describe the team's individual and collective qualifications for successfully implementing the school design (CAPACITY)
- Signed and completed statements of assurances
- Identify members of the school's applicant team, founders, proposed leadership team and board members
- Provide resumes and biographies of team members



## Enrollment and Admission Information

- Recruitment and admissions policies
- Enrollment Summary: Years 1 – 4
- Rationale for number of students and grade levels served in year one and basis for proposed growth plan
- Important to research the viability of the proposed enrollment plan in Year 1 and during the initial charter period



## Educational Program Overview

- Key components of educational model
- Unique and/or innovative features of the proposed school
- Provide evidence that demonstrates school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for target student population
- Understanding of and ability to implement CCSS



## Demonstration of Need

- Describe why the district of residence or region of residence was selected
- Complete demographic analysis form (Exhibit 4a)- evidence of need in chosen district(s)/region of residence
- Describe the needs not being met by existing school options and how the proposed school will meet the perceived needs and offer the greatest educational benefit to students



# Community and Parent Involvement

- Describe the role of parents, families and community in the application process
- Describe the role for ongoing community engagement



## If the founding team is planning on partnering with an Education Service Provider or Replicating Entity

- Replicating Entity – CMO/EMO or single-site existing school that is replicating
- Provide an overview of the organization's strategic vision and four-year growth plan for developing schools in NJ
- Describe targeted districts or regions of residence
- Provide a history of the ESP or replicating entity's current schools – student achievement and fiscal performance (evidence of success)-Exhibit 5a
- Describe the relationship between the school and the ESP/replicating entity and the impact on the school's mission and goals



# Exhibits

- Exhibit 1a: Charter School Founder and Board Member Information Form
- Exhibit 2a: Statement of Assurances Form
- Exhibit 3a: Founder Information Table
- Exhibit 4a: Demographic Analysis Form
- Exhibit 5a: Education Service Provider/  
Replicating Entity Information  
Sheet



# Overview

- The Department will review and score all Phase One Applications against a holistic rubric
- All applicants will be notified of their status on June 14, 2013
- For those applicants deemed 'Qualified Applicants', the Phase Two application will be due on July 12, 2013
- The Phase Two application is limited to 75 total pages, excluding additional required attachments
- The Phase Two application will ask more in detail questions regarding the Educational, Organization, Financial and overall capacity



## Educational Program and Capacity

- Curriculum and Instructional Design
- Promotion & Retention Strategies
- Daily & Annual Schedule
- School Culture & Supplemental Planning
- Special Populations
- Student Discipline
- Educational Program Capacity



## Governance and Organizational Plan and Capacity

- Governance
- Parent & Community Involvement
- Student Recruitment and Enrollment
- School Staff Structure
- Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation
- Professional Development
- Goals and Objectives and Performance Management
- Facilities
- Start-Up
- If applicable, Education Service Provider/Replicating Entity Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
- If applicable, School Management Contracts
- Waivers or Equivalencies of Regulation



## Financial Plan and Capacity

- Financial Plan
- Budget Summary- present a four year budget (year by year)
- Detailed Budget Narrative
- Cash Flow Schedule-present a one year cash flow



## Budget Summary

- Use prescribed format- **4 year budget-** year 1 through 4
- Classify expenditures properly
- Be consistent
- 60% of budget must be instructional
- No reliance on outside funding sources
- No deficits can be evidenced in budget or cash flow
- The Financial Plan should provide an understanding of how the applicant intends to develop and manage the school's infrastructure and finances. It should present a clear picture of the school's revenue projections and expenditure requirements.
- Anticipated per pupil aid will be provided on the DOE website by county, district, and grade level. For purposes of revenue projection, only consider students from your district or region of residence.  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/chartsch/app/PerPupil.htm>



## Budget Narrative

- Should be able to stand alone with funding provided by the state and local share
- All budget lines must be itemized and show detailed, descriptive calculations
- Must agree to Budget Summary
- Must be consistent in both the fiscal and program sections
- *Include any vendor quotes obtained to support major expenditures in the Budget Narrative. Examples may include insurance, rental fees, accounting system, furniture and equipment, etc.*



## Cash Flow Schedule

- Consider timing of expenditures and when the charter school will receive funding
- Include ALL planning period activities
- No long term debt-schools must pay off loans by June 30th
- No monthly or year end deficits can be shown
- This cash forecasting requirement is to ensure that the charter school has a plan to meet its financial obligations; and is necessary for the planning of current and future operations.
- Escrow Account-must include \$75K for escrow account by the end of the fourth year of operation



## Exhibits

- Exhibit 1b: Start-Up Plan Template: September 2014 to June 2016
- Exhibit 2b: Budget Term Definitions and Charter School Budget Summary Key
- Exhibit 3b: Funding Calculation Example
- Exhibit 4b: Receipt of 2013 Charter School Application
- Exhibit 5b: Charter School Program Act of 1995



## A Successful Application Will Include The Following Elements:

- Describe a curriculum and instructional strategies that align with **target population**, and state standards
- Articulate sound rationale for selection
- Include plans for meeting all student needs, including acceleration, remediation, special education, and ELL
- Identify performance goals that are clear, measurable, ambitious, and attainable



## A Successful Application Will Include The Following Elements:

- Articulate a robust student assessment plan, including a range of summative/ formative and formal/informal
- Describe shared beliefs, customs, or behaviors for students, teachers, and staff
- **Describe meaningful plans for parent and community engagement**
- Anticipate staffing and PD needs
- Align with the budget
- Demonstrate the applicant team's capacity to develop and execute the plan



## A Successful Application Will Include The Following Elements:

- Document proper legal structure
- Identify founding Board members, and include plans for developing diverse membership
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for Governance vs. Management (and ESP/Replicating Entity's role, as applicable)
- **Identify desired qualifications and responsibilities for key school-level leadership**
- Include staffing structure that supports educational program
- Establish personnel policies or plans for timely development
- If using an ESP, presents a clear rationale for selection, including evidence of the ESP's track record
- **Include a viable plan for facilities**
- Demonstrate the applicant team's capacity to develop and execute the plan



## A Successful Application Will Include The Following Elements:

- Realistic revenue and expense projections with clear assumptions
- No budget deficits
- Spending priorities that align with the school's mission, educational program, management structure, and professional development needs
- Realistic cash flow projections
- Start-up plan with reasonable cost assumptions
- Sound financial controls to ensure proper use of public funds and long-term viability
- Capacity of applicant team to develop and execute the plan



## A Successful Application Will Include The Following Elements:

- Academic, financial, and organizational track record
- Business plan/capacity to expand (e.g. financials, human capital pipeline, back office support, etc.)



## PITFALLS

- Choose one charter school name and be consistent throughout the application
- Be consistent regarding total enrollment in all sections
- Caution the use of the University, Community, Liberty, Academy Charter School of Excellence-these names are overused
- Be sure to include the words “charter school” in the name of the school
- Do not use the name of a private entity in the name of the charter school
- Carefully choose your founders and ensure they will be available in June to complete Phase 2 and will be available in late August/September for potential in depth interviews
- Ensure that each district identified has at least one “qualified” founder
- Identify ONE viable facility



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## Additional Resources:

Performance Framework

<http://www.nj.gov/education/chartsch/PerformanceFramework.pdf>



# QUESTIONS?