



# **Model Charter School Application**

A Resource for Missouri Charter Public School Sponsors

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\*Denotes sections required only of certain applicants

## Introduction

This application calls for proposals to start charter schools that are likely to achieve strong educational outcomes. Through charter schools, we expect to provide families with educational options of many different shapes and sizes but with one thing in common: quality education.

This application packet will guide you through the steps of developing a charter school proposal. Each section requests information about a specific aspect of your plan and presents the evaluation criteria that reviewers will use to determine whether the section meets the standard for approval. Experience has shown that successful charter schools tend to have a number of common characteristics:

- A clear, focused, results-oriented mission statement that aligns all parts of the proposal
- Demonstrated understanding of the population that the school is likely to serve;
- An educational program that is likely to be effective for the target population;
- Strong and diverse leadership; and
- Strong financial planning and management.

If you have any questions regarding this application or the evaluation process, please contact:

SPONSOR NAME AND ADDRESS

Dear Prospective Charter School Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in creating a charter school in Missouri. In 1998, the Missouri legislature created an opportunity for the creation of new, performance-based public schools through the charter process. Charter schools are secular, tuition-free public schools that operate as independent nonprofit organizations. They offer new public education options to children, families, teachers and school leaders. Our state's charter school legislation offers students, families and educators more choices in public education. It allows schools autonomy and flexibility in how they operate in exchange for establishing higher expectations for educating students well.

Sponsors

Charter schools may be sponsored by the following: The school board of the district; A public for-year college or university with its primary campus in the school district or in a county adjacent to the county in which the district is located, with an approved teacher education program that meets regional or national standards or accreditation; A community college located in the district; or Any private four-year college or university located in a city not within a county with an enrollment of at least one thousand students and with an approved teacher preparation program. (RSMo 160.400;2;1-4) Sponsors conduct contract oversight that evaluates performance, monitors compliance, informs intervention and renewal decisions, and ensures autonomy provided under the law. (RSMo 160.400;9;4) Since charter schools are public, the role of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is to seek compliance with federal and state regulations required for charter schools.

Charter schools are created by application to a designated charter school sponsor. The Sponsor has been designated as a charter school sponsor under Missouri law. A listing of current sponsors can be found at: <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/charterschools/>. Direct conversation with sponsor(s) is encouraged as you start the preparation of the application. As a charter school sponsor, our goals are to enhance public education opportunities and quality. We are committed to creating opportunities for high quality schools for the youth and families of our communities. Any individual or group may submit an application to the Sponsor. This application packet is designed

to provide potential applicants a clear understanding of our expectations for the content and quality of an application that merits approval.

### Governance

Charter schools are governed by a nonprofit governing board. Missouri law requires applicants to demonstrate that they are qualified to operate a charter school. Typically, high performing charter schools have governing boards that are composed of individuals with a mixture of backgrounds and expertise relevant to governing a public, not-for-profit educational organization. Such experience and expertise may include educational programs, legal compliance, real estate and facilities, financial management and accounting, fundraising and development, community engagement, and parents.

### Autonomy

Charter schools operate with substantial flexibility and autonomy in comparison to traditional public schools. Charter school operators have the opportunity and responsibility to decide the best ways to allocate resources like time, people and money to best meet the needs of their students. For example, operators may determine the length and structure of the school day in a way that best fits the educational program; they may structure staffing in a way that best supports teachers and students; and they may structure the budget to ensure that teachers will have the instructional resources they need to be effective. The authority of charter school operators to make these types of decisions is premised on the belief that those closest to students are best suited to make critical decisions about meeting their learning needs.

### Accountability

Performance-based accountability is a central component of the charter school idea. Missouri charter school law requires that schools have clear, measurable academic performance standards under which they will operate and be evaluated. In addition, schools must be financially accountable and must comply with applicable laws such as health and safety, special education, and all civil rights.

The Sponsor will approve applications that clearly demonstrate strong capacity for establishing and operating a quality charter school. This standard requires a sound education program, organizational plan, financial plan, and intervention/revocation procedures, as well as strong capacity to implement the proposal effectively.

## Application Components and Guidelines

The application consists of the following components:

### Cover Sheet(form included)

The Cover Sheet provides a summary of key information related to the proposed school, including geographic location, enrollment projections, and applicant contact information. (not to exceed 2 pages)

### Narrative

The five sections of the Narrative are the:

- A. Education Plan,
- B. Organizational Plan,
- C. Business Plan,
- D. Pre-Opening Plan, and
- E. The Performance Contract.

For the first 3 sections, there are specific response categories. The Pre-Opening Plan and Performance Contract will be developed jointly with the sponsor and must be included as part of the charter. Each response category includes the following:

- Applicant Instructions that inform you what you are expected to present.
- Evaluation Criteria by which reviewers will evaluate your response.
- Statutory Reference(s) that document the legal authority for the request.
- Required Exhibits (if applicable) listing attachments that you are required to provide as part of the response. The required exhibits do not preclude applicants from providing any other attachments that you consider relevant and significant for presenting your plan.

### Appendix

The Appendix provides resources related to the application, including forms for some of the required attachments, such as the budget template and the questionnaire for prospective charter school board members.

### Format Requirement

The Application should adhere to the following format:

- All pages, including appendices and table of contents, should be numbered
- Hard copy on white, 8.5"x11" paper
- One-inch margins on all sides
- Minimum 11-point font
- Paragraph formatting may not be more compact than standard single space
- Spiral-bound (3-ring binders are also acceptable); no paper clips or folders, please

There is no minimum length for an application. *There are, however, strict limits on the maximum number of pages:*

- Narrative : maximum of 60 pages
- Attachments: maximum of 100 pages,

There is ample opportunity to develop a high quality application within these boundaries.

### Requirements to submit charter application to DESE

Application must be submitted by **January 31** prior to the school year of the proposed opening date of the charter for a fall opening of the school year. It is recommended that charter application be submitted before January 1.

The application package should include the following:

- Six spiral-bound copies
- One clearly labeled, unbound original copy
- An electronic version of the application (MS Word or compatible format) on either a CD or USB-compatible flash drive.

### Additional Submission Requirements:

- Check with your sponsor or review agency for additional submission requirements
- The applicant must provide DESE and their sponsor documentation that a copy of the application has been sent to the school board of the district in which the charter school is to be located. 160.405.5 (8) (a)
- Document that a copy of the application has been sent to the school board of the district in which the charter school is to be located. 160.405.5 (8) (a)

## Application Requirements Checklist

All applicants are required to complete and submit a full application detailing the proposed charter school's educational, organizational and business plans.

### Minimum Requirements for Submission

The minimum requirements for submission of a complete checklist - Application package are as follows:

- Cover Sheet
- Table of Contents
- Narrative, not to exceed 60 pages
- Sample Lesson Plans (A.2)
- Sample Daily Schedule (A.4)
- Annual Calendar for First Year (A.4)
- Performance Contract (A.7)
- Articles of Incorporation signed and dated (B.1)
- Corporate-by-laws signed and dated (B.1)
- Documentation that the applicant is a Missouri nonprofit corporation (B.1)
- Documentation of Criminal Background checks for all prospective board members or assurance of satisfactory completion as a condition of service (B.1)
- Documentation of family care safety registry checks for all prospective board members or assurance of satisfactory completion as a condition of service (B.1)
- Prospective Board Members Resume or CV (B.2)
- Completed form labeled Appendix 1: Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members for each prospective board members (B.2)
- Organizational Chart (B.3)
- Job Descriptions(B.3)
- Schools Contracting with Education Service Provider (ESP) (B.7.1)
  - Background Information
  - Schools managed by ESP
  - Missouri Schools managed by ESP
  - Service Agreement/Contract with ESP
- Budget for the proposed charter (C.1)
- Opening year cash flow analysis (C.1)
- Insurance (C.5)
- Closure (C.6)

For more information on application submission, please refer to the Application Components and Guidelines pg. 5 section of this document.

# Missouri Charter School Application Cover Sheet Page 1 of 2

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL

NAME OF NOT-FOR-PROFIT 501 (C) (3) ORGANIZATION THAT WILL HOLD THE CHARTER

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

TITLE/RELATIONSHIP TO NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

MAILING ADDRESS

TELEPHONE (PRIMARY)

TELEPHONE (SECONDARY)

EMAIL ADDRESS

EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (IF APPLICABLE)

PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF SCHOOL (IF KNOWN)

DISTRICT IN WHICH THE SCHOOL WILL BE LOCATED

INTENDED OPENING SCHOOL YEAR FALL 20\_\_

## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

	GRADE LEVEL	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT		GRADE LEVEL	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT
SCHOOL YEAR 1			SCHOOL YEAR 6 *		
SCHOOL YEAR 2			SCHOOL YEAR 7 *		
SCHOOL YEAR 3			SCHOOL YEAR 8 *		
SCHOOL YEAR 4			SCHOOL YEAR 9 *		
SCHOOL YEAR 5			SCHOOL YEAR 10 *		

AT FULL ENROLLMENT THIS SCHOOL INTENDS TO SERVE GRADE LEVELS \_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_ WITH A PROJECTED TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF \_\_\_\_\_.

## Missouri Charter School Application Cover Sheet Page 2 of 2

### SCHOOL DESCRIPTION (1 pages maximum)

The purpose of this section is to have a snap-shot description of the school. Describe the schools mission, curriculum, grades served and what benefits the students will enjoy as a result of attending this school. Your description will be used by the sponsor to provide information to the public.

### APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate. I recognize that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocations after award. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the organization.

---

SIGNATURE

---

TITLE/ROLE

---

DATE

---

PRINTED NAME

## A. Education Plan

The Education Plan should define what students will achieve; how they will achieve it; and how the school will evaluate performance. It should provide a clear picture of what a student who attends the school will experience with respect to educational climate, structure, assessment and outcomes.

- A.1 Mission, Vision and Goals
- A.2 Curriculum and Instruction
- A.3 Assessment
- A.4 School Calendar and Daily Schedule
- A.5 Target Population
- A.6 Special Student Populations
- A.7 School-Specific Goals and Objectives
- A.8 School Climate and Discipline
- A.9 Optional Programs
  - A.9.1 Career Education\*
  - A.9.2 Virtual Programs\*
  - A.9.3 High-Risk Alternative Schools\*
  - A.9.4 Gifted Education\*
  - A.9.5 Four Year College and/or University Affiliation\*

*\* Denotes Sections Required Only of Certain Applicants*

## **A.1 Mission, Vision and Goals**

### **Applicant Instructions**

State the school's mission and briefly present your vision for how the school will operate. Describe the school's educational foundation and the culture or ethos. Include an overview of the instructional methods and any research or experience that indicates why you have chosen to use this approach with your anticipated student population.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

A response that meets the standard will

- Present a compelling 1-2 sentence mission statement that defines the purpose of the school;
- Present a coherent and concise vision of what the school will look like in 5-10 years if it is achieving its mission.
- Present a coherent and concise summary of the school's performance goals over the term of the charter.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1, 160.405.1 (1)

## A.2 Curriculum and Instruction

### Applicant Instructions

Provide a description of the curriculum to be used by the school, including measurable objectives and subject area content and skills for each grade level. Show how the curriculum aligns with the Missouri Learning Standards, Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), and Course Level Expectations (CLEs). Discuss the specific strategies that will be relevant or necessary to successful implementation of the curriculum. Discuss how curriculum and instruction needs are reflected in plans for professional development.

Please state if the charter school intends to use curriculum that has already been developed or if the school intends to develop core curriculum. This will determine if you utilize criteria A or B for this section.

### Evaluation Criteria

A. If the school intends to use curricula that have already been developed, a response that meets the standard will:

- Identify the school’s philosophical approach to educating students ensure that priorities are meaningful, manageable and measurable, and focus on improving student outcomes;
- Be consistent with the school’s mission, education program design
- Present a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning—particularly in core academic areas—and will demonstrate alignment with Missouri Learning Standards, CLE’s, GLE’s;
- Make a commitment to align with COMMON CORE which will be assessed in 2014-2015
- Demonstrate understanding of relevant instructional strategies; and
- Present a coherent framework for professional development that is likely to support effective implementation of the curriculum and how staff development will be assessed.
- Provide professional development that is likely to support effective implementation of the curriculum and how staff development will be assessed.

A. If the school intends to develop core curricula following approval, a response that meets the standard will

- Present a viable plan for development of the curricula for core academic areas and for ensuring alignment with Missouri Learning Standards, CLE’s, GLEs;
- Make a commitment to align with common core which will be assessed in 2014-2015
- Describe the framework for development of the curricula for core subjects; and
- Identify sound research, experience or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide curriculum development; and
- Present a coherent framework for professional development that is likely to support effective development and implementation of the education program - define how staff development needs will be assessed
- Provide professional development that is likely to support effective implementation of the curriculum and how staff development will be assessed.

### Required Exhibit

Include sample lesson plan for a single core subject (of your choice), from two different grade levels that illustrate strategies for implementation of the curriculum consistent with the mission and educational philosophy.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(2).

## A.3 Assessment

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the school's approach to assessment. Explain how the school will evaluate progress of individual students, cohorts over time, and the school as a whole toward meeting the statewide requirements. In particular, describe how the school will determine proficiency (by grade, achievement level, or grouping level) for mathematics, communication arts and one other subject area on an interim basis. For high school courses, describe the school's plan for developing and using end of course assessments?

Detail the school's policies and criteria for promoting students to the next grade or level for graduation from the school?

Discuss how the school uses assessment information to modify the educational program and improve instruction, student learning and staff development?

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Align with the school's mission and overall educational priorities;
- Represent a clear, credible, and sound plan for measuring and reporting the educational performance and progress of individual students, cohorts, and the charter school as a whole including valid and reliable measures of student outcomes;
- Explain how the school will use assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at improving academic outcomes; and
- Demonstrate understanding of and commitment to compliance with assessment requirements applicable to all Missouri public schools consistent with state law and relevant policies of the State Board of Education including the Missouri Assessment Programs, as applicable.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.5(2); 160.405.5 (6); 160.518

## A.4 School Calendar and Daily Schedule

### Applicant Instructions

Present the school calendar showing the number of days the school will be in session and sample daily class schedules showing daily hours of operation and allocation of time for core instruction, supplemental instruction, extra-curriculars, and after-school activities, as applicable.

### Required Exhibits

- Sample Daily Schedule for one grade in each grade level at which the school intends to operate (elementary, middle and/or high school)
- Annual Calendar for the first year of operation

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Satisfy the requirement for a full school term as defined in 160.011;
- Comply with minimum requirements for the number of school days and hours pursuant to 160.041;
- Align with the school's educational mission and goals; and
- Provide, in advance, for the makeup of a minimum of six inclement weather closure days pursuant to 171.033.2

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1; 160.405.5(2); 160.041; 160.011; 171.033.2

## A.5 Target Population

### Applicant Instructions

Complete an Anticipated Enrollment Table for each year of the school's proposed charter. This section should describe the anticipated population of the school and should explain how the proposed mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services align with the educational needs of that population.

#### *Dropout and At-Risk Populations*

*Missouri sponsors are required by law to grant at least one-third of their charters to schools that actively recruit dropouts or high-risk students as their student body. A "high-risk" student is one who is at least one year behind in satisfactory completion of course work or obtaining credits for graduation, pregnant or a parent, homeless or has been homeless sometime within the preceding six months, has limited English proficiency, has been suspended from school three or more times, is eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch, or has been referred by the school district or other charter schools recommended for enrollment in an alternative program. To the extent that the applicants intend to serve a high dropout and/or at-risk population, the response should focus on this group, in particular.*

(Alternative Schools should also see section A.9.3)

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Present evidence to indicate that the enrollment projections by grade and school-wide for each year of the charter are realistic; and
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the students the school intends to and is likely to serve;
- Present a persuasive explanation of how the proposed mission, curriculum, teaching methods and services are likely to meet the needs of the target population

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.2(4);  
160.405.1

## A.6 Special Student Populations

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the school's plan for educating children with special needs, particularly those with limited English proficiency and those identified with disabilities. Explain specifically how these students will be identified, how the school will develop plans for their education, how their progress will be monitored, and how the school has budgeted and staffed to meet those responsibilities. In addition, explain how the school's curriculum and approach to instruction will be designed or adapted to serve those students.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Demonstrate understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding the identification and education of students with disabilities;
- Indicate a commitment to serving the full range of needs of students with disabilities;
- Indicate a commitment to serving the full range of needs of special education students;
- Demonstrate understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding identification and education of the likely ELL population;
- Indicate a commitment to serving the homeless as required by McKinney Vento;
- Indicate a commitment to ensure section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Describe plan for students requiring transportation due to Individual Education Plan. Describe contingency plan for students requiring transportation, due to Individual Education Plan.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(2),  
160.405.5(7)

## A.7 School-Specific Goals and Objectives

**Nothing in Mo Revised Statute 160.405.5 (6) shall be construed as permitting a charter school to be held to lower performance standards than other public schools within a district; however, the charter of a charter school may permit students to meet performance standards on a different time frame as specified in its charter.**

### Applicant Instructions

Like all public schools, charter schools are subject to state and federal accountability requirements. For all approved schools, the charter contract will include a set of core educational performance expectations that reflect state accountability requirements and the Sponsor’s Performance Expectations outlined in the Missouri Monitoring and Renewal Framework. In addition to those standard requirements, most schools have goals that are particular to the school’s educational philosophy and organizational priorities.

*Identify two key academic goals and one non-academic goal for which the school plans to hold itself accountable.* Explain how those align with the school’s mission, the proposed educational program, the statewide accountability system.

Well-developed school-specific goals will be:

- Specific
- Measurable (based on identified indicators and expected performance levels and a reliable measurement instrument)
- Ambitious and attainable
- Relevant (to your mission)
- Time-bound

Following are examples of performance goals.

#### *Example 1: Student Gains*

At all grade levels, students at the Charter School will average 1.1 years of academic growth as measured by multiple administrations of a nationally norm-referenced growth-measured exam.

#### *Example 2: Performance Status*

(Percentage) of students enrolled at the Charter School for a three consecutive year period will achieve Proficient or Advanced status on the state’s annual MAP Test assessment.

#### *Example 3: Student Re-enrollment (Non-academic)*

The Charter School will retain (percentage) of its enrolled students year-to-year during its first three years of operation.

#### *Example 4: Parent Satisfaction (Non-academic)*

The Charter School will demonstrate a (percentage) overall satisfaction rating in an annual survey administered to parents or designated legal guardians of students attending the school during each academic year.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Align with the school’s mission and educational program;
- Define goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, ambitious and attainable, relevant and time-bound;
- Align with the Sponsor’s Performance Expectations outlined in the Missouri Monitoring and Renewal Framework;
- Set high standards for student learning; and
- Present clear criteria for promotion from one level to the next, and for graduation,
- Include a timeline for students to meet performance standards that shall not be construed as permitting a charter school to be held to lower performance standards than any other public schools within a district.

### Required Documents:

- Performance contract developed with sponsor.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(1); 160.405.5(6).

## A.8 School Climate and Discipline

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the strategies the school will employ to develop and sustain a safe and orderly climate that supports fulfillment of the educational goals. Explain the school's student behavior philosophy and discipline policy or code of conduct for both the general student population and for students with special needs. The full discipline policy should be included as an attachment if already developed.

Explain how the school will encourage family involvement and communication to support student learning, and how it will gauge satisfaction with school climate.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Describe an approach to student discipline that is likely to promote a safe and orderly learning environment; and
- Present legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension, dismissal and expulsion or a reasonable plan for their development; and
- Outline a clear strategy for engaging parents and guardians in the life and culture of the school; and
- Include evidence that the school will ensure a safe environment conducive to learning
- Comply with all laws and regulations relating to student discipline under 160.261 and notification of criminal conduct under 168.071

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.2

## **A.9 Optional Programs** (if applicable)

This section includes additional educational programs that charter schools might consider. These sections should only be included in your application if the charter school intends to include the programs.

- A.9.1 Career Education\*
- A.9.2 Virtual Education\*
- A.9.3 High – Risk Alternative Schools\*
- A.9.4 Gifted Education\*
- A.9.5 Four – Year College and/or University Affiliation\*

\*Denotes sections required only if certain applicable

## A.9.1 Career Education (if applicable)

### Applicant Instructions

Applicants who intend to operate career education programs must complete the Application for Approval of Career Education Programs. Schools seeking funding under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 must have the previously mentioned items plus, the applicant should:

- Provide the rationale for the program. Include results of community-based assessments, student interest survey data, advisory committee recommendations, and needs identified by business and industry/employment outlook.  
Note: The student interest survey data must be derived from Missouri Connections or a similar student interest assessment.
- List the program goals and objectives in measurable terms.
- Provide a topical outline of major units of instruction in the proposed program.
- Identify program instructional contact hours, course sequence, and grade levels (if applicable).
- Identify major methods of instructional delivery (laboratory, classroom, project-based, problem-based, etc.)
- Identify the Career and Technical Student Organization and describe how it will be used to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Identify postsecondary partners and/or business/ apprenticeship partners. Provide a brief summary of possible postsecondary articulation agreements/dual credit agreements and/or partnership agreements that will be put in place once program/course is operational.
- Identify and describe opportunities for assisting students in transitions to the workplace or continued education through such activities as experiential education, cooperative education, internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and job placement.
- Identify the assessment plan to measure student progress including competency achievement. Identify the plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the program, including evaluation instrument(s) used, methods of evaluation, and how results will be used for program improvement. For secondary level programs, identify the process for including

program improvements in the charter school's improvement plan.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Present a compelling rationale consistent with business and industry needs, student interests, and advisory committee recommendations;
- Present measurable program goals and objectives;
- Present learning objectives, content, credits and skills appropriate for the anticipated student populations, that are aligned with Show-Me Standards, Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), Course Level Expectations (CLEs), Common Core, and appropriate business/ industry standards;
- Include convincing plan for transitioning students to work, further training, or higher education;
- Include a complete assessment plan to measure student progress; and
- Include a complete plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

Affirmation that a local plan will be submitted, will adhere to all the rules and regulations of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 and will meet the core indicators of performances, such as:

- Attainment of challenging academic content standards and academic achievement standards;
- Attainment of career and technical skill proficiencies;
- Attainment of a secondary diploma or equivalency, a proficiency credential, certificate, or degree in conjunction with a secondary school diploma;
- Graduation rates;
- Placement in postsecondary education or advanced training, in military service, or in employment; and
- Participation in and completion of career and technical education programs that lead to non-traditional fields.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.2

## A.9.2 Virtual Programs (if applicable)

### Applicant Instructions

162.1250 (3) allows LEA's to receive state school funding for resident students who are enrolled in the LEA and who are taking a virtual course offered by the school district. For funding, the virtual classes must:

- Have a contact teacher with a valid Missouri teaching certificate assigned to interact with students of virtual courses
- Utilize appropriate content-specific tools and software
- Make orientation training available for teachers, instructors, and students as needed
- State and make privacy policies available to teachers, instructors, and students
- State academic integrity and Internet etiquette expectations regarding lesson activities, discussions, electronic communications, and plagiarism to teachers, instructors, and students prior to the beginning of the virtual course or virtual program
- Specify computer system requirements, including hardware, web browser, and software to participants
- Permit the online teacher or instructor to add content, activities, and assessments to extend learning opportunities
- Make resources available by alternative means, including but not limited to, video and podcasts
- Make resources and notes available for teachers and instructors in addition to assessment and assignment answers and explanations
- Make technical support and course management available to the virtual course or virtual program teacher and school coordinator
- Include assignments, projects, and assessments that are aligned with students' different visual, auditory, and hands-on learning styles
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively use and incorporate subject and developmentally appropriate software in an on-line learning module

- The virtual course or virtual program arranges media and content to help transfer knowledge most effectively in the online environment

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will include:

- An explanation of the amount of online time required for elementary and second students,
- The manner in which teachers will deliver instruction, assess academic progress and communicate with students to provide assistance,
- A specific explanation of any cooperative learning opportunities, meetings with students, parents, and guardians, field trips or study sessions,
- The technology, including types of hardware and software, equipment and other materials which will be provided by the virtual charter school to the student,
- Describe how the virtual charter school uses technology to provide a significant portion of its curriculum and to deliver a significant portion of instruction using the Internet or other electronic means,
- A description of how the virtual charter school will define and monitor a student's school day, including the delineation of on-line and off-line time,
- The technical support that will be available to students and parents or guardians
- The methods to be used to insure authenticity of student work and adequate proctoring of examinations
- The types of frequency of communication between the virtual charter school and the students and the manner in which the virtual charter school will communicate with parents and guardians
- A description of accommodations that will be provided for special needs students
- State the student/teacher ratio for elementary, middle and senior high that will be enforced for the virtual charter school

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 162.1250

### **A.9.3 High – Risk Alternative Schools** (optional for high-risk and alternative schools)

#### **Applicant Instructions**

Missouri’s charter school law places a priority on meeting the needs of high-risk and alternative populations. Such schools will be held to the same performance standards as other schools, but students in those schools may meet performance standards on a different time frame.

Applicants proposing to operate an alternative charter school or one serving high-risk students and their sponsors will propose comprehensive school-specific academic and behavioral measures that are mutually agreeable.

Describe the comprehensive academic and behavioral measures that the school proposes to use. Explain how those measures align with the school’s mission, the proposed educational program, and the statewide accountability system.

If approved, the comprehensive measures will be used in addition to standardized public school measures to evaluate school performance.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

A response that meets the standard will

- Present performance measures that are a valid and reliable means for determining whether students are meeting performance standards;
- Ensure that the school will be held to the same performance standards as other schools; and
- Specify the time frame in which students will be expected to meet the performance standards
- Show compliance with all federal accountable standards.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.5(6) (b)

## A.9.4 Gifted Education (if applicable)

### Applicant Instructions

By law and tradition, LEAs are expected to provide programs of instruction suitable for the full range of student ability, from handicapped and disadvantaged learners through those who are academically advanced.

The state special education law (H.B. 474) enacted in 1973, authorized the State Board of Education to establish standards for special programs for gifted students. The following sections of state law pertain to gifted education programs:

- Section 162.675. RSMo, defines gifted children as “those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum.”
- Section 162.720. RSMo, states that LEAs may establish programs for gifted children “where a sufficient number of children are determined to be gifted and their development requires programs or services beyond the level of those ordinarily provided in regular public school programs...” and states that the State Board of Education “shall determine standards for such programs. Approval of such programs shall be made by the State Department of Education based upon project applications submitted each year.”

LEAs must develop a system to identify children in need of the gifted education services that the district provides. Screening criteria should be as inclusive as possible. Identification criteria and test instruments should be chosen that will maximize the students’ strength and limit the effects of any possible biases Limited English Proficiency (LEP), culturally diverse background, poverty, etc. Districts should consider their demographics when creating a menu of comparable test instruments that will be acceptable for screening and placement.

#### a. Screening

All available data on the total school population should be considered during the screening stage. Any information contained in permanent records should be used, including nationally-normed achievement Arts.

test scores, group intelligence test scores, Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) scores, and previous grades, anecdotal records demonstrating creative problem-solving and general creativity, and recommendations from teachers, parents, peers, and other personnel. Districts should also consider what methods will be effective in selecting hard-to – identify and traditionally underrepresented students. Districts should establish their own criteria so as to allow for approximately 10 to 20% of the population to be considered for further evaluation.

#### b. Individual Evaluation and Placement

Following screening and referral, the school may determine criteria which would be appropriate for the academic or fine arts service(s) provided, the grade levels to be served, and the background and needs of students in the district. It is expected that the use of tests and scales may differ within as well as between district. For example, different procedures or instruments may be used with students of different ages or for parts of the program with specific curriculum focus, such as a Fine Arts, Math or Science focus. Alternate selection criteria and methods may also be used for special populations or students with special needs (ie. LEP, LD).

##### 1. General Mental Ability

Full-scale or GAI scores on an individual intelligence test at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile: Although they are more time-consuming, individually administered intelligence tests provide more accurate indicators for final placement purposes than do group tests. The district may use various IQ tests, administered according to their appropriateness in reference to program areas and student needs. On the Core Data screen 25 lists the minimum required test score needed for placement.

##### 2. Academic Ability

If achievement test scores are used for formal evaluation and placement, they must be derived from a norm-referenced test and the cut-off score must be set at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. MAP content area test scores may be used for placement in subject specific classes. For interdisciplinary programs, tests must be used that sample a majority of the core subject areas of Math, Science, Social Studies, and Communication.

## Applicant Instructions Continued:

On the Core Data screen, 25 list the minimum required test score. While composite scores will be used for most multi-disciplinary academic programs, it may be appropriate to use subtest scores if an academic program is focused on a specific subject area. The scores must be in the subject area(s) or in the subtest area(s) most related to the design of the gifted program.

### 3. Creativity, Reasoning, and Problem-solving Ability

Results of valid tests or other assessments indicating outstanding ability in one of the following areas; (1) creative and productive thinking, (2) advanced insight, (3) outstanding imagination, (4) innovative or creative reasoning ability, (5) advanced perception of cause and effect relationships, (6) problem solving, or (7) abstract concepts. These areas of ability must be related to the design of the gifted program. A minimum criterion for identification must be established by the district and listed on the Core Data Screen 25.

### 4. Other

Documented evidence of exceptional performance in a general academic area, a fine arts area, or another area related to the design of the gifted program: Such evidence may take the form of portfolios of student work, formal classroom observations by persons knowledgeable about characteristics of gifted students, auditions, product demonstrations, etc. Districts must establish minimum criteria for placement and list it on the Core Data screen 25. Other adaptations may also be appropriate. The examples listed above do not include all possibilities. We strongly encourage districts to consult with DESE personnel regarding appropriate alternative identification procedures.

## Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Contain written procedures to systematically identify and serve gifted/talented students in all grades consistent with state administrative rules and regulations
- Provide identified gifted/talented students with instructional objectives and strategies that are appropriate to their identified needs and are provided on a continuing basis as these students progress through the grades
- Provide a written curriculum for the gifted education program that is intellectually and affectively engaging, and is taught in a meaningful context.

Statutes References: 162.675, 162.720

### **A.9.5 Four-Year College and/or University Affiliation** (if applicable)

A college or university affiliation is not required for a charter school. Applicants should respond to and be evaluated on this section only if they propose to have a college or university affiliation.

#### **Applicant Instructions**

Discuss any affiliation that the school intends to have with a four-year college or university, including a private college or university, or a community college. Address the specific purpose(s) of the affiliation including teacher training and staff development, curriculum and assessment development, use of physical facilities, or other purposes beyond sponsorship duties.

Describe your plans for developing the affiliation and any steps already taken. Include evidence that you are likely to be successful in establishing the proposed affiliation such as letters of support or other documentation of commitment from the college or university.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

A response that meets the standard will:

- Present a clear plan for college or university affiliation that is aligned with and likely to further the school's mission;
- Demonstrate a substantial likelihood that the school will be successful in establishing the proposed affiliation; and
- Demonstrate that the college or university has the capacity and commitment to fulfill its anticipated role.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.400.8

## B. Organizational Plan

The Organizational Plan should provide an understanding of how the school will be operated, beginning with its governance and management. It should present a clear picture of the school's operating priorities, delegation of responsibilities, and relationships with key stakeholders.

- B.1 Governing Body
- B.2 Governing Board Composition
- B.3 Management and Operation
- B.4 Staffing and Human Resources
- B.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment
- B.6 Parent, Community, and Educator Involvement
- B.7 Optional Organization Operations
  - B.7.1 Educational Service Providers\*
  - B.7.2 Joint Application\*

*\* Denotes Sections Required Only of Certain Applicants*

## B.1 Governing Body

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the entity that will hold the charter and be responsible for governing the school. Provide documentation of the entity's legal status including Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and documentation of legal not-for-profit status. To the extent that the organization exists and has functions independent of the operation of the proposed school, provide a brief description of the organization, its history, its current operation, and the relationship between its existing operations and the proposed school.

### Required Exhibits

- Articles of Incorporation signed and dated
- Corporate By-laws signed and dated
- Documentation that the applicant is a Missouri nonprofit corporation and has applied for and/or received not-for-profit status from the Internal Revenue Service
- Documentation of criminal background checks as required by 160.400 RSMo 11 for all prospective board members or assurance of satisfactory completion as a condition of service
- Documentation of family care safety requests checks as required by 160.400 RSMo 11 for all prospective board members or assurance of satisfactory completion as a condition of service

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Present proper documentation that the entity proposing to hold the charter is a Missouri nonprofit corporation;
- In the case of pre-existing organizations, demonstrate that the operation of the proposed school is consistent with the organization's overall mission and operation and provide – detailed – of the operational relationship and the separation between the pre-existing organization and the governing board.
- Ensure the governing board is aware and follows the sunshine law in conducting board and committee business (Public Government bodies, Sunshine policy 610.010.4, Meeting Notice 610.020, Public Records 610.010, 023, 024, 026, Emails 610.025, Closed Meeting/Records 610.021, 610.022)
- Document that a copy of the application has been sent to the school board of the district in which the charter school is to be located. 160.405.5 (8) (a)

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.400.5; 160.400.11; 160.405.1(5); 160.405.2(1); 610.010-030

## B.2 Governing Board Composition

### Applicant Instructions

List the members of the proposed governing board including their names, current employment, and relevant experience or qualifications for serving on the board, including, but not limited to, their relationship to the community in which the school will be located.

For each proposed governing board member, the application should include, as an attachment, a resume or CV, and the completed form labeled *Appendix 1: Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members*.

Describe any specific plans for recruitment of additional governing board members, including, but not limited to, plans that would involve parental, professional educator, or community involvement in the governance of the school.

### Required Exhibits

- Prospective Board Member Resumes or CVs
- Completed form labeled *Appendix 1: Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members* for all prospective board members

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will indicate that the board:

- Has a thorough understanding of their governing role and ultimate responsibility for the school;
- Has capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the education program presented in the application;
- Has capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds;
- Has capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school's compliance with its legal obligations;
- Will represent the community well;
- Is aware of their duties and responsibilities as public servants in accordance with 105.450; and
- Will generally have the capacity to found and sustain a quality school.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(5); 160.405.2(1); 105.450

## B.3 Management and Operation

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the organizational structure of the school and its day-to-day operation. Explain the management roles and responsibilities of key administrators with respect to instructional leadership, curriculum development and implementation, personnel decisions, budgeting, financial management, legal compliance, and any special staffing needs.

Your response should describe the primary responsibilities for each key position and identify critical skills or experience necessary to fulfill those responsibilities. This information should be included for all staff identified on the organization chart.

The school leader description should especially be detailed including desired qualifications and responsibilities. If the school leader has not already been identified, discuss plans for recruitment and selection of the school leader.

### Required Exhibits

- Organizational Chart that shows the staffing and reporting structure for the board, administration and staff
- A job description for all staff identified on the organizational chart.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will include

- Clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school;
- Demonstrated understanding of management needs and priorities;
- A staffing plan that appears viable and adequate for effective implementation of the proposed educational program
- Provision that qualifications for hiring should provide assurance that background checks and family care safety registry checks as regarded by 160.408.11 will be conducted for every employee.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(5), 160.408.11

## B.4 Staffing and Human Resources

### Applicant Instructions

Discuss the staffing plan for the term of the charter including anticipated staffing needs and recruitment strategies. Discuss how the plan supports sound operation and successful implementation of the school's educational program.

Describe the instructional skills, experience, and development that teachers will need to have in order to be successful. Discuss how those needs are reflected in the plan for teacher recruitment.

Include a draft of a Staff Handbook or Employment Manual if developed. In responding to this section, consider the following questions:

- What strategies does the school have for recruiting and retaining effective teachers?
- How do the staffing-related budget assumptions align with educational program needs?
- How does the staffing plan reflect the anticipated enrollment and growth of the school?
- How will the school determine appropriate experience, training and skills of non-certified instructional personnel?
- What will be the employer-employee relationship for staff at the school?

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Present strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers that are realistic and reasonably likely to be effective;
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs that are aligned with the budget and with the school's anticipated enrollment;
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs with respect to successful implementation of the educational program; and
- Assure that the charter does not employ teachers whose certificate of license to teach has been suspended or revoked by the state board of education, 168.071

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.415, 168.071

## B.5 Student Recruitment and Enrollment

### Applicant Instructions

Provide enrollment projections for the school, by year, for the first five years of operation.

Describe the plan for recruitment and enrollment of students. Explain how the school will be publicized and marketed throughout the community to a broad cross-section of families and prospective students. What strategies will you use to reach families that are traditionally less informed about educational options?

Include an explanation and evidence to support the enrollment projections. Relevant evidence may include, among other things, the following:

- Community demographic information (numbers of potential students);
- Documentation of community or family demand for the proposed school such as letters of intent to enroll; and
- Enrollment data from schools currently operating in community.

Describe the proposed enrollment process and provide assurances that the charter school will comply with the requirements of 160.410.

If the charter school intends to establish admissions preferences based on a geographical area around the school, sibling enrollment in the school, parent employment at the school, or-in the case of a workplace charter-parent employment in the business district or business site of the school, provide a clear description of the proposed preference and how it will apply in the event that capacity is insufficient to enroll all pupils who submit a timely application.<sup>1</sup>

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Include an outreach and recruitment plan that demonstrates understanding of the community to be served and is likely to be effective including for families traditionally less informed about educational options;
- Present enrollment projections that are supported by evidence of actual or potential demand; and
- Include lottery, enrollment, and admissions policies and plans that comply with the requirements of 160.410.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.410

<sup>1</sup>Specific attendance limitations apply for charter schools sponsored in Kansas City and St. Louis. In Kansas City, a parent must be resident in the district. In St. Louis, a parent needs to meet residency or non-minority requirements depending on the county, requirements or must be eligible to attend the district's schools under a prior order of the court. For additional information about the eligibility of students who reside in St. Louis county please contact the Voluntary Inter-district Choice Corporation at 314.721.8422. Sponsors receiving applications for Kansas City and St. Louis should consult legal counsel or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for charter school enrollment guidance.

## B.6 Parent, Community and Educator Involvement

### Applicant Instructions

Discuss your plans for community involvement in the governance and operation of the school.

Describe the nature of potential partnerships including examples of how community partners will play an integral part in the life of the school and identify specific organizations with which the school is already working, or likely to partner.

Describe your plans for developing community partnerships and any specific steps you have already taken. Include in your response relevant documentation such as letters of support or commitments to provide or share resources.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Present a vision and strategy for community involvement that is reasonably likely to further the school's mission and program; and
- Provide evidence that anticipated partnerships are realistic and achievable
- Demonstrate evidence of parent, community, and educator involvement in the governance, operation, and vision of the charter school.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(5);  
160.420.5

## **B.7 Optional Organization Operations** (if applicable)

If the charter plans to utilize an Education Service Provider (ESP) and/or if the application is a joint application, these sections will need to be included in the application.

B.7.1 Education Service Provider (ESP)\*

B.7.2 Joint Application\*

\*Denotes sections required only if applicable

## B.7.1 Education Service Providers (if applicable)

All applicants are asked to declare whether they intend to contract with an education service provider (ESP). The term “education service provider” refers to any number of organizations that contract with the governing board of a school to provide comprehensive services. The major types of ESPs that serve charter schools are education management organizations (EMOs), charter management organizations (CMOs), and comprehensive school design providers.

After making the initial declaration, applicants should complete the remainder of the section only if the school expects to contract with an ESP.

### Applicant Instructions

If the school expects to contract for services with an education service provider, discuss the school’s decision to work with an ESP, in general, and the selected ESP, in particular. Describe the planned relationship between the school and the ESP and how that relationship will further the school’s mission and program. Provide a clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP. Describe the ESP’s roles and responsibilities in relation to the school’s management and governing board. Describe the school’s performance expectations for the ESP. Discuss how the school evaluates the ESP’s performance.

### Required Exhibits

- Background information on the ESP including relevant performance data for other schools that the ESP has managed
- A list of any other schools managed by the ESP in the state of Missouri with contact information
- The services agreement as executed between the governing board and the ESP (or template version if not yet executed)

### Evaluation Criteria

The response should present a clear picture of the contractual relationship and accountability between the ESP and the school’s governing board that is consistent with the school’s mission and educational program.

A response that meets the standard will:

- Provide persuasive explanation of the reasons for contracting with an education service provider, in general, and this provider, in particular;
- Provide sense of how the proposed relationship with the ESP will further the school’s mission and program;
- Provide evidence of ESP’s success in serving students population similar to target population
- Provide clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP;
- Provide coherent delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school’s governing board, management and the ESP; and
- Provide ESP performance expectations that are consistent with the school’s accountability requirements and the means by which the board will hold the ESP accountable for meeting those expectations.
- Disclose and explain any termination or nonrenewal of contracts for equivalent services for any other charter schools in the U.S. within the past 5 years.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1(5)

## B.7.2 Joint Application (if applicable)

*The following section should be completed if, pursuant to section 160.400.8, Rev. Stat. Mo., the school proposes to be affiliated with a college, university, museum, educational institution, other not-for-profit organization, or other partner that is not an educational service provider. Applicants that do not plan to have such an affiliation should proceed directly to Part C, Business Plan.*

### Applicant Instructions

If you are proposing to affiliate with a college, university, museum, educational institution, other not-for-profit entity, or any other partner, describe the rationale for the affiliation, the benefit that the school expects to receive from the partnership, and provide the following information for each affiliated organization:

- Name of the organization;
- A letter of intent or commitment from a bona fide representative of the partner organization indicating that the organization is undertaking the affiliation and the terms and extent of the understanding;
- The name of a contact person for the partner organization; and
- Contact information (address, phone number, facsimile number, and e-mail address) for the contact person at the affiliated organization;
- A description of the nature and purpose of the proposed affiliation including the specific purpose(s) for the affiliation (e.g. teacher training and staff development, curriculum and assessment, access to physical facilities, etc.)

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Include complete information about each affiliated partner;
- Provide documentation regarding the terms of the joint partnership;
- Present persuasive evidence that the plan for the affiliation is sound and that the purpose(s) is/are likely to support achievement of the school's mission.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.400.8

## **C. Business Plan**

The Business Plan should provide an understanding of how the applicants intend to develop and manage the school's infrastructure and finances. It should present a clear picture of the school's revenue projections; expenditure requirements; facilities needs; transportation and food service plans; and pre-opening plan.

- C.1 Budget
- C.2 Financial Management
- C.3 Facility
- C.4 Transportation
- C.5 Insurance
- C.6 Closure Plan

## C.1 Budget

### Applicant Instructions

Use the Charter School Budget Template (Appendix B) to detail the school's estimated revenues and expenditures for the proposed term of the charter including the preoperational startup year.

Provide a cash flow analysis for the first fiscal year of operation (July 1- June 30).

Include explanation and discussion of key budget assumptions underlying the budget projections and explain how the budget aligns with and supports implementation of the educational program. If the school anticipates incurring debt for any reason, such as for acquisition of its facility, the budget must address the schedule for debt repayment and the budget discussion should elaborate on the repayment assumptions and plan.

Discuss the school's contingency plans for cash flow challenges, a budget shortfall, lower than expected student enrollment or other financial challenges in the early years of operation.

Charter applicants should review Section 161.520, RSMo indicating the criteria used to identify LEAs that are financially stressed.

### Required Exhibits

- Budget for the proposed charter term
- [www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/charterschools/charterschoolapplication.htm](http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/charterschools/charterschoolapplication.htm)
- Opening year cash flow analysis

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Present budget priorities that are consistent with and support key parts of the plan, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility;
- Present realistic, evidence-based revenue and expenditure assumptions, including for any plan to incur and repay debt;
- Present viable strategies for meeting potential budget and cash flow challenges, particularly for the first year of operation;
- Demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school;
- Budget must reflect the projected percentage of reserve funds at the end of each fiscal year for the LEA.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1; 160.415.11; 161.520

## C.2 Financial Management

### Applicant Instructions

Describe the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances and identify the staff position(s) that will be responsible for financial oversight and management. Describe how the school's finances will be managed and who will be responsible for the protection of student and financial records. Your response should address, among other things, the school's plans in the following areas:

- Provisions for an annual audit consistent with its LEA status;
- Development and dissemination of an annual financial report; and
- Providing recommended liability insurance to indemnify the school, its board, staff and teachers against tort claims.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Demonstrate understanding of the school's financial management obligations;
- Present evidence that the school is prepared to adhere to generally accepted accounting practices and the Missouri Financial Accounting Manual;
- Present evidence that the school will has or has capacity to develop adequate policies and processes for tracking enrollment and attendance eligibility, eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch; special education and limited English proficient enrollment; and
- Demonstrate preparation to meet its insurance, annual audit, Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR) and other key financial management obligations
- Ensures that any grants or federal programs the charter received are administered according to established guidelines including the Code of Federal Regulations, Uniform Grant Guidance (OMNI), and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.1; 160.405.4; 160.405.5(4)

Additional information:

<http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/fas-GeneralFederalGuidance.pdf>

## C.3 Facility

### Applicant Instructions

Discuss the school's facility needs based on the educational program and anticipated enrollment. If the applicants have identified a facility, indicate the location (street address, city, and zip code) and provide either floor plans or a description including, at a minimum, the number and size of the classrooms, common areas, administrative areas, recreational space, any community facilities, and any residential facilities. Explain how the facility will meet the needs of students and provide an assurance that it will be accessible to students with physical disabilities.

To the extent that the school has discussed or established specific lease or purchase terms, include discussion of the proposed terms and any draft agreements. If the school intends to lease facilities from a school district, pursuant to section 160.405.9, discuss the status of those plans and provide evidence of any district commitments.

To the extent that the facility will require renovation or 'build out,' describe those plans including anticipated timing and cost.

If the school anticipates incurring debt as part of its facilities acquisition plan, the budget must include a repayment plan, as indicated in the Budget section, above.

If a facility has not been selected, specify potential locations that are under consideration and discuss the process and time line for selecting, acquiring, renovating (if appropriate) and taking occupancy of a suitable facility.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Reflect a sound understanding of facilities needs;
- Demonstrate knowledge of facilities costs including, as applicable, cost of purchasing, leasing, building, or renovating an educational facility that conforms to applicable health, safety, and occupancy requirements.
- Present evidence to support facilities-related budget assumptions;
- Include evidence that the proposed facility will be adequate or present a plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's educational program, anticipated location, and target population; and
- Demonstrate that the school's plan for acquisition of a facility is financially viable.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.5(2),(4)

## C.4 Transportation

### Applicant Instructions

State whether the school intends to provide transportation for students. If so, describe the transportation plan and explain budget revenue and expenditure assumptions including those related to anticipate state aid pursuant to section 163.161.

If the school intends to contract with the local district or any other third party for transportation services, discuss the status of those plans and provide evidence of the third party's readiness and terms for providing those services.

### Evaluation Criteria

If the applicants have elected to provide transportation, a response that meets the standard will

- Present a thorough, realistic, and cost-effective transportation plan; and
- Provide specific evidence of third party readiness and terms for providing transportation services consistent with the school's budget assumptions. 3<sup>rd</sup> party must collect required information [include in application].

If the applicants have elected not to provide transportation, a response that meets the standard will

- Present a clear statement of the school's intent not to provide transportation services;
- Describe viable transportation options for students; and
- Describe contingency plans for students requiring transportation due to IEP requirements.

### Evaluation Note

With the exception of related services required under an Individualized Education Plan, charter schools are not required to provide transportation for students to and from the school.

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.415.8.

## C.5 Insurance

### Applicant Instructions

Provide evidence of ability and preparation to obtain liability insurance coverage (minimum A-BEST rating) in the following areas:

- Directors' and Officers' Liability
- Commercial General Comprehensive Liability that also expressly covers corporal punishment and athletic participation
- Educators' Legal Liability
- Employment Practices Liability
- Sexual Abuse Liability (separate policy or a separate part of general comprehensive insurance with independent limits)
- Automobile Liability
- Excess Liability or Umbrella (i.e. bundled commercial general liability, directors' and officers' liability, automobile liability, and sexual abuse liability)
- Workers Compensation Liability
- Surety bond for the school's chief financial officer in an amount to be determined based on the cash flow of the school or evidence that school's liability insurance covers employee theft insurance
- Include evidence to support the budget expense assumptions related to insuring the schools such as copies of broker or agency estimates.

### Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will

- Evidence of requisite insurance coverage or ability to obtain requisite insurance coverage
- Evidence of requisite surety bond for school CFO or ability to obtain requisite surety bond

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.405.11; 160.405.13.

## C.6 Closure

### **Applicant Instructions**

Provide evidence of a charter school closure plan approved by your sponsor.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

A response that meets the standard will:

- Provide the detailed elements of the plan as described in 5 CSR 20-100.265, Charter School Closure

STATUTORY REFERENCE(S): 160.400-160.425 and 161.092.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions about Charter School

## Appendix 1:

### Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members<sup>2</sup>

#### Instructions

The Applicant's proposed governing board members are required to provide a current resume detailing their qualifications and experiences and respond to the Request for Information that follows. *Please be sure to submit these items together for each board member. Information on a proposed board member will not be considered unless complete information (resume and completed Request for Information) is provided.*

#### Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members

Governing a public charter school requires commitment and responsibility. The governing board will be ultimately responsible for the sound education of all children enrolled in the school and for the responsible use of the public funds that the school receives. Your desire to serve on a charter school board indicates a belief in and commitment to quality public schools for all children. It also indicates a willingness to serve as a public official. As a charter school sponsor, we recognize the significance of those commitments and appreciate your willingness to take on the accompanying responsibility.

If the application is approved, the board will enter into a charter contract that establishes the terms under which the school will operate. Therefore, one purpose of the charter school application is to provide the sponsor a sense of the board's capacity to govern the school effectively. With that purpose in mind, *each prospective board member should respond to this request for information.*

#### Background

1. Describe your educational and employment history. You may complete this item by attaching a resume.
2. If true, please affirm that you will be at least eighteen years old by January 1 of the year in which the proposed charter school would open.
3. How did you become aware of the proposed charter school and the opportunity to serve as a member of its board?
4. Explain why you would live to serve on the board.
5. Have you previously served on a board of a school district or a not-for-profit corporation (including the board of a parochial or independent private school)? If so, describe any relevant experience. If you have not had any previous service, discuss why you wish to serve in this capacity.
6. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?
7. What relevant knowledge and experience will you bring to the board?
8. Assuming the school is successful, what is your image of how the school will look towards the end of its first year? What will it be like after four years?

#### Educational Philosophy

9. What is your understanding of the school's mission and/or philosophy?
10. Are you familiar with the school's proposed educational program? How would you describe it?
11. What are the characteristics of a successful school? What specific steps do you think the board of education will need to take in the first year or two to ensure that this school is successful?

## Appendix 1 (continued): Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members<sup>2</sup>

### Conflict of Interest Disclosure

12. Do you or your spouse know any of the other prospective board members? If so, please so indicate the name of the person and the relationship.
13. Do you or your spouse have a pre-existing relationship with any people already identified as prospective school employees? If so, please so indicate and describe the relationship.
14. Do you or your spouse know anyone that plans to do business with the school? If so, please so indicate and describe the relationship and the nature of the potential business.
15. If the school proposes to partner with an educational service provider (a management company), do you or your spouse know any employees, owners, or agents of that provider? If so, please indicate the individuals you know and the nature of the relationship.
16. (If the school does not intend to partner with an educational service provider, write "N/A").
17. If the school intends to partner with an educational service provider, do you or your spouse have a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the educational service provider?
18. (If the school does not intend to partner with an educational service provider, write "N/A").
19. Do you anticipate conducting any business with the educational service provider, the school, or both? If so, describe the potential relationship.
20. Are there any potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests that you can foresee in the context of your service on the school's board? If so, explain.
21. How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school's board to be engaged in self-dealing (i.e. making arrangements involving the school that materially benefit the board member, his or her friends or family).

<sup>2</sup>Adapted from the Request for Information from Prospective Charter School Board Members developed by the Charter Schools Institute at the State University of New York for use in charter school applications.

## Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions about Charter Schools

### **What are charter schools?**

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are open to all families contingent on available space. They are permitted to operate with more flexibility and independence than traditional schools.

### **Are charter schools public schools?**

Yes, every charter school is a public school.

### **How do charter schools differ from traditional public schools?**

Charter schools differ from traditional public schools in that they are exempt from many state and school district regulations. They decide their own curriculum, staffing, organization and budget. In exchange for this autonomy, they promise to educate pupils well-meeting or exceeding Missouri's educational performance standards-or they lose the privilege of operating the school.

### **How are charter schools started?**

Charter schools are established by a group of individuals--often teachers, principals, education experts and/or parents--that have a vision for the kind of school they would like to create. The founding group submits a plan for the school to a sponsor. Founding groups often spend a year or more planning their schools before submitting an application.

If the sponsor finds that the plan demonstrates that the group is likely to create a high quality school, the application is approved, and proceeds to the State Board of Education for approval.

### **Who gets to attend a charter school?**

As long as space is available, almost any pupil who applies to a charter school may attend that school provided the pupil meets the age or grade range that the school intends to serve. Enrollment is free and non-selective. Usually enrollment is limited to a specific number of students per grade.

Each school has a non-selective, free application process. If the number of applications exceeds the available space, the school will hold a random lottery to determine which children get to enroll.

### **What is a charter?**

A charter is an agreement between the school's sponsor and the school that documents the school's rights and responsibilities as well as the educational outcomes that the students will be expected to attain. The charter is good for a fixed number of years, usually five. At the end of the charter term, the sponsor determines whether the school has met the terms of the agreement, particularly with respect to handling public funds responsibly, providing a safe environment and educating pupils well.

If the school has met expectations, the sponsor will seek to renew the charter, and if approved by the State Board of Education the school will continue to operate. If not, the charter will not be renewed and the school will be closed.

### **Do charter schools serve students with special needs?**

Like all public schools, charter schools are required to provide access and services to all students, including students with disabilities and those who are limited English proficient.

### **May a charter school be religious in nature?**

No. Like all public schools, charter schools must comply with the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution that prohibits religious instruction in public education.

### **What is a sponsor?**

A sponsor is an organization that has the authority to oversee charter schools and are paid a fee. The Missouri legislature has authorized local school districts to sponsor charter schools in certain situations, depending on the accreditation status of the district. In addition, the legislature has provided that public four-year colleges, community colleges or private four-year colleges meeting certain conditions may act as charter school sponsors in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas. Also the Missouri Charter Public School Commission is a sponsor.