



CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION

For a Polk County School Board Sponsored
Public Charter School

Polk County School Board / Office of Charter Schools

2021

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CHARTER RENEWAL COVER SHEET

NAME OF CHARTER SCHOOL SEEKING RENEWAL: _____

CHARTER SCHOOL LOCATION NUMBER: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

GRADES SERVED: _____

This School has been designated a High Performing Charter School pursuant to s. 1002.331, Florida Statutes. Provide the name of the person who will serve as the primary contact for this charter renewal application. The primary contact should serve as the contact for follow-ups, interviews, and notices regarding the renewal process.

CONTACT PERSON: _____

TITLE/RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNING BOARD: _____

PRIMARY TELEPHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (if any): _____

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for renewal of a public charter school is true to the best of my knowledge and belief: that this application has been approved by the school's Governing Board; and that, if awarded a renewed charter, the school shall continue to be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the English language, or academic achievement. This is a true statement, made under the penalty of perjury.

SCHOOL NAME: _____ MSID #: _____

GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR: _____

DATE OF APPROVAL BY GOVERNING BOARD: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

INTRODUCTION

The contractual agreement between your charter school and the School Board of Polk County **will expire on June 30, 2022**. In accordance with Florida Charter Law, a charter may be renewed provided that a program review demonstrates that the criteria in paragraph (a) have been successfully accomplished and that none of the grounds for nonrenewal established by paragraph (8)(a) has been documented pursuant to Section 1002.33 (7)(19)(c)(1), F.S.

The School Board of Polk County is committed to continued sponsorship of charter schools that demonstrate academic success, fiscal accountability, and appropriate governance.

To demonstrate a successful charter school program, the completion of the charter renewal application must present evidence of success in this format. A successful completion of the renewal of a charter will be an articulate, affirmative response, based on clear credible evidence, to the questions that guide charter school accountability. It must also offer compelling answers to questions about the school's plans for the future. This charter renewal application should be a sound, well-supported explanation of why the School Board of Polk County should renew a school's charter. Key questions include:

1. Is the academic program a success?
2. Is the school a viable organization?
3. Is the school's program and operation faithful to the terms of its charter?

In conducting a contract renewal review, the sponsor will focus its analysis on the school's performance in three categories:

1. Educational performance
2. Financial performance
3. Organizational performance

F.S. 1002.33 states the Sponsor shall make student academic achievement for all students the most important factor when determining whether to renew or terminate the charter.

While an initial charter application addresses future plans, the renewal charter's process focuses on demonstrated, documented performance. A successful charter renewal application will be able *to stand on its own* as a clear and credible explanation, addressing both the school's strengths and weaknesses, of why the school's charter should be renewed. The explanation should be complete and should not require further explanation or clarification by the school. The charter review team of reviewers should not have to guess at the meaning of particular sections or statements or make any assumptions about why the evidence presented is an appropriate or compelling answer to a question. Like a well-written business plan or legal brief, the charter renewal application should not leave to the reader any responsibility for deciphering the explanation or interpreting the evidence presented. Successful renewal documents will identify strengths, as well as weaknesses, and will explain why the weaknesses do not outweigh a school's strengths. In addition, plans to address major weaknesses will be clearly outlined.

RENEWAL APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The charter renewal application deadline is **4:00PM Friday, September 3, 2021**. The charter school must submit **3 bound copies** of the charter renewal application and **1 USB electronic copy** to:

The School Board of Polk County
Attention: Office of Charter Schools
Jim Miles Professional Development Center
4270 Wallace Road
Lakeland, FL 33812

The charter renewal application must contain:

- Charter Renewal Cover Sheet
- Table of contents
- Tabbed sections
- Charter Renewal Application Certification Statement
- Executive Summary
- Consecutive page numbers throughout including attachments and aligned with the table of contents
- **Proper sources referenced on all tables, graphs, and other data**

A renewal site visit will be conducted at the charter school and scheduled in **October** with the governing board, school administration, school staff (as applicable), and district staff.

A charter contract may be negotiated concurrently with the charter renewal application process; however, a charter contract will not be finalized and recommended for public hearing until school board approval of charter renewal application.

CHARTER RENEWAL TIMELINE

September 3, 2021	4:00 pm	Charter renewal application deadline.
September 7, 2021		Charter Review Team receives access to renewal application via Office 365.
September 7-October 8, 2021		Charter Review Team conducts independent review of renewal application.
October 2021*	TBD	Charter renewal site visit and review team to vote on renewal application. *
November 8, 2021*		Final renewal evaluation is emailed to charter school.
November 16, 2021*	12:30 pm	Charter renewal application is presented at work session
December 7, 2021*	5:00 pm	Charter renewal application is voted on during board meeting
December 8, 2021*		Renewing charter school is notified of board vote

*Dates and site visit methods are subject to change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School Name		Name of Legal Entity			
School Number (MSID)		Location	(School Address)		
Principal		Board Chair			
Management Company (ESP)					
Opening Year		Current Contract Term			
Requested Charter Contract Term (5yr, 10yr, 15yr)		Current Grades Served			
Current Enrollment		Maximum Enrollment	(Contract capacity)		
Student Waitlist	(Yes or No-Include # if Yes)	Meets Class Size Requirement	(Yes or No)		
Meets Class Size Requirement	(Yes or No)	Fiscally Sound	(Yes or No- if No, list the financial status)		
High Performing	(Yes or No- include year of receipt if yes/ may also list year span in which previously designated if it has been removed)				
<u>Mission Statement</u>					
<u>Vision Statement</u>					
<u>Target Population</u>					
<u>Curriculum Focus</u>					
<u>Student Demographics</u>					
% FRL/CEP	% Minority	%Students w/Disabilities	% 504	% Gifted	% ELL

SECTION 1: IS THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

1A. Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established educational goals during the term of its charter?

What reviewers will look for:

Clear quantitative evidence that the school has made satisfactory progress in meeting the student academic performance objectives in its accountability plan.

As much as possible, the school's claim about student performance should be supported by evidence from impartial, independent assessments such as standardized tests, juried assessments, or audited portfolios – that is, assessments that credibly employ the impartial judgment of qualified individuals (or testing companies) outside the school's community. If some of the student performance evidence is based on internal staff evaluations of student performance, the charter renewal application should address the degree to which staff judgment is confirmed by objective assessment data. The charter renewal application should also describe the extent to which staff judgments are informed by documented criteria and methods that are consistently applied. Information should include disaggregated data that addresses, at a minimum, gender, socio economic and minority populations. A plan to address overall academic performance weaknesses, if identified, as well as increased performance for specific sub-groups should be detailed.

In supporting its response to this question, the school should strike a balance between presenting evidence that provides too simplistic an overview (e.g. "all of our students scored 'competent' or above in all subject areas on standardized test X".) and all data that is too detailed (e.g. "17% of 7th graders who took Standardized Test X without accommodation scored between the 30th and 40th percentile of the word recognition sub-section of the reading test.") The data presented should provide the reader with a comprehensive picture of how all of the school's students have performed relative to the school's specific academic performance objectives and should illustrate the range of performance and the variations in performance among those students.

A school may not have fully reached the standard called for by a particular academic performance objective. In that case, it should explain clearly why it considers the progress that it is has made to be reasonable, and, if appropriate, explain any circumstances that may have prevented the school's full attainment of the objective.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Promotion and graduation requirements and results of assessments that determine whether a student has met externally developed test results, internally developed test results, externally reviewed portfolios, or juried assessments. Include curriculum mapping, description of how curriculum in the core content areas are aligned with current standards, documentation on grading practices/expectations, and how academic intervention is provided to tier 2 and tier 3 students.

1B. Has student performance significantly improved and/or been persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments?

What reviewers will look for:

Evidence of progress that the school's students have made over time while enrolled in the school. The academic performance of students at one point in time (such as at the time of charter renewal application for renewal) says nothing about their progress over time. The school must present evidence of students' longitudinal progress while at the school and make an argument for why that performance is evidence of significant improvement or persistent strength. Ideally, evidence should aggregate individual student progress over time. If such data are not available or are inconsistent, evidence regarding annual grade level performance should be provided.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Externally developed test results, internally developed test results, externally reviewed portfolios, and juried assessments.

SECTION 2: IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

2A. Is the school financially solvent and stable?

What reviewers will look for:

A clear, concise narrative providing sufficient evidence that the school has competently and effectively managed its finances. The narrative should address any prior deficiencies or findings from independent audits and/or budget deficits in a fiscal year, and each was corrected/addressed. Any future planned major expenditures (e.g. capital projects, significant enrollment expansion, etc.) should be included, with details of how said expenditures will be funded (e.g. acquiring debt, or reserve funds), as well as the academic benefit(s) of said expenditures.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Results from independent financial audits, financial audits, and financial statement.

2B. Is enrollment stable and near capacity?

What reviewers will look for:

A clear concise statement about the history of its enrollment during the term of its charter. It should comprehensively document demand and turnover, with a clear explanation of the reasons for turnover. It should call attention to any significant trends in enrollment (such as increases or decreases in demand, increases or decreases in turnover) and provide evidence that supports the explanation of such trends. Specific attention and detail should be included regarding minority population numbers, both overall and by grade level. A plan should demonstrate overall enrollment is reflective of the community in which the school is located. Factors to be considered when determining if the school's population is reflective of the community in which the school resides should include, but not limited to, Free and Reduced Lunch status, racial make-up of the community, and ESE and ESOL populations.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Enrollment data, turnover data, waiting list data, exit interviews or surveys.

2C. Is the school governance sound and professional in performing the governance duties of the charter school?

What reviewers will look for:

Evidence that governance has been responsible and effective, that it has handled organizational challenges competently, that it has implemented a clear and fair procedure for evaluating teacher performance, and that it has responded effectively to complaints. It should provide evidence that the school's board has performed capably and independently.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Evaluations, surveys, formal complaints, board turnover (Chart of Attachments J), leadership changes, examples of governance issues such as all pending and threatened legal actions involving the school and how they were addressed and resolved.

2D. Are the professional staff of the charter school competent and resourceful?

What reviewers will look for:

Evidence that the professional staff are fully qualified and have performed capably. Evidence that the staff has met or made significant progress relative to the school performance goals of the school's accountability plan. Demonstrate evidence of ongoing staff training and a plan to address teacher retention and training in the upcoming renewal charter period.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Sources may include, but are not limited to evaluations, surveys, formal complaints, teacher turnover rates, qualifications of teachers and staff, administrative leadership changes (Chart of Attachments K), examples of staff issues and how they were addressed.

SECTION 3: IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF ITS CHARTER?

3A. Have the school's program and operation been consistent with the terms of its charter?

What reviewers will look for:

A restatement of each of the school's measurable performance objectives, and concise evidence that the school has made reasonable progress in meeting each of the objectives. If the charter renewal application has already explicitly addressed any of these objectives earlier in the document (e.g. student performance), those sections may be cited. The charter renewal application should also restate the school's major programmatic elements as described in the charter and should indicate the extent to which each has been successfully implemented.

Please attach an Accountability Plan Progress Report Summary for Renewal (Chart of Attachment E) that clearly addresses each objective in the school's approved Accountability Plan and/or SIP as attached to their charter. This report must demonstrate the progress made toward each objective annually and if the objective was met annually. If an objective is not met at any time, the report should summarize the plan of action that was put in place or will be put in place.

Suggested sources of evidence:

Accountability Plan and/or SIP and relevant performance data (e.g. attendance, parental participation, safety, mobilization of non-state resources, staff development, plant improvement, parent surveys) and the school's Educational Program Design Self Evaluation. (Chart of Attachment F).

3B. Is the school within the bounds of applicable statutory and regulatory requirements?

Provide a clear explanation of how the school has complied with each of the following areas of state and federal regulations. Include in your reporting any complaint filed in regard to any of these program areas. Listed below are the program areas and documentation which should be included to support your narrative response.

What reviewers will look for:

A clear explanation and supporting documentation of how the school has complied with each of the following areas of state and federal regulation, and should address any complaints made regarding its compliance:

- **English Language Learners**
Describe what steps your school has undertaken to provide support to English Language Learner students. Documentation should include summaries of home language survey data and English language assessments conducted by the school. (i.e. number of students assessed, number found to be limited English proficient)
- **ESE/Learning Support**
Describe how your program has met the needs of students with disabilities enrolled in your school. Include information regarding special education staffing, numbers of students receiving special education services, the number of special education students that have left the school and their stated reason for leaving. Documentation should include an overview of your ESE services and compliance documentation, as well as a summary of any state program review audits that have been performed at your school, and/or any complaints which have been filed against the school with regard to ESE and their findings. Random sample of student IEP's supporting service documents (service logs, IEP progress reports, etc.). Proposed expansion or modification of ESE programs and services as well as other future plans for ESE students should be detailed.
- **Mental Health**
Provide evidence regarding mental health referral, interventions and monitoring is provided. Supply restraint/seclusion documentation, data explaining the number of students seen for mental health issues, documentation of the three-step process of determining risk, writing a plan and monitoring. Also include the number of students referred to community service providers.

- State Testing Requirements

Provide summary data on the number of students who were tested using FSA testing, SAT/10, and other required Florida state testing (Chart of Attachments A). Include the number of students who received testing accommodations, the types of accommodations provided, the number of students who received an alternative assessment, if any, and the type of alternative assessment administered.

- Student Learning Time

Summarize your school calendar as provided in previous annual reports that demonstrates that your school meets time and learning requirements. If your school serves high school students, describe how high school graduation requirements are met and opportunities for remediation are afforded to students. Describe any after school tutoring programs, intercessions, summer learning opportunities or other learning extension activities as well as any planned expansion or changes during the upcoming charter renewal period.

- Student Discipline

Has the school developed a code of conduct that is different than the sponsor's?

Include summary data on the number of suspensions issued including both in house and out of school suspensions and suspensions from transportation and general categories under which the suspensions were issued (i.e. "cutting class", "foul language" etc.)

- School Safety

Provide your school drill policy and logs documenting completion and a disaster preparedness plan if an emergency should arise. The disaster preparedness plan should identify staff assignments with specific roles.

- Student Services

Demonstrate school wide character education program/initiatives/bullying program, evidence of social/emotional/behavioral instruction. Include evidence of activities of complying with the Jeffrey Johnston Act such as information to parents regarding how to report bullying, documentation of investigations and determination, and preventative actions (i.e. curriculum, activities, etc.).

- Miscellaneous

Is the school utilizing and upgrading in the management of the school and in the classroom? Is the school compliant with copyrighted material and software licenses?

Is the school following any procedures regarding maintaining the confidentiality of student records and/or responding to subpoenas?

Has the school maintained an atmosphere free from discrimination for both students and staff? What protocols are in place?

Suggested sources of evidence:

Implementation plan for special education; relevant data regarding enrollment and services provided to special needs and bilingual student; school schedule and calendar; dates of and participation in SAT/10, FSA testing; suspension and expulsion numbers; a description of internal procedures for student discipline; description of health services; record of safety issues during the term of the charter; presuit notices, written demands, or lawsuits; adopted policies and procedures; codes of conduct; protocols.

SECTION 4: IF THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER IS RENEWED, WHAT ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE REQUESTED NUMBER OF YEARS OF THE NEXT CHARTER?

- 4A.** Please describe how your founding charter has served the school during its initial contract term. What has the school learned during its first term about the strengths and weaknesses of its charter, and what changes in the charter does this experience suggest?
- 4B.** Please attach a 1-year School Improvement Plan/Accountability Plan (Chart of Attachments D) that defines the school's student and school performance objectives for its next charter term. Describe how these objectives are aligned with the current state curriculum frameworks.
- 4C.** How will the school evaluate and disseminate effective elements of the school's structure or program?
- 4D.** What facility or facilities do you plan to use during the term of the next charter? Please submit written documentation that the school remains in compliance with all building, health, safety, and insurance requirements as described in Florida Statutes, and that all related inspections and approvals are current.

What reviewers will look for:

An honest and reflective self-appraisal of strengths and weaknesses of the school's charter, with credible and compelling plans for building on success, maintaining momentum, and making necessary changes for improvement of the school.

CHART OF ATTACHMENTS

Please tab or separate attachments as noted below

- A. FSA and/or other state accountability tests as applicable within the last six (6) years. *
- B. Annual student gains to include lowest 25% within the last six (6) years. *
- C. Percentage of students tested within the last six (6) years. *
- D. 1-year Accountability plan and/or SIP that defines the school's student and school performance objectives for its next charter term. Describe how these objectives are aligned with the current state curriculum framework.
- E. Accountability Plan progress report (template provided).
- F. Educational Program Design Self Evaluation (template provided).
- G. Requested charter contract term.
- H. Projected budget for the requested length of term requested by the renewal. If requesting a long-term contract, please attach a comprehensive Business Plan that demonstrates support for the request.
- I. Projected Enrollment for the next contract term.
- J. Governing board membership and turnover (template provided).
- K. Administration and staff turnover within the last five (5) years (template provided).

**The school district will generate and provide FSA and EOC reporting. The charter school must supply data taken from other resources to measure student outcomes, if applicable.*