

AN AUTHORIZER'S GUIDE TO YEAR ZERO: MONITORING OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOLS

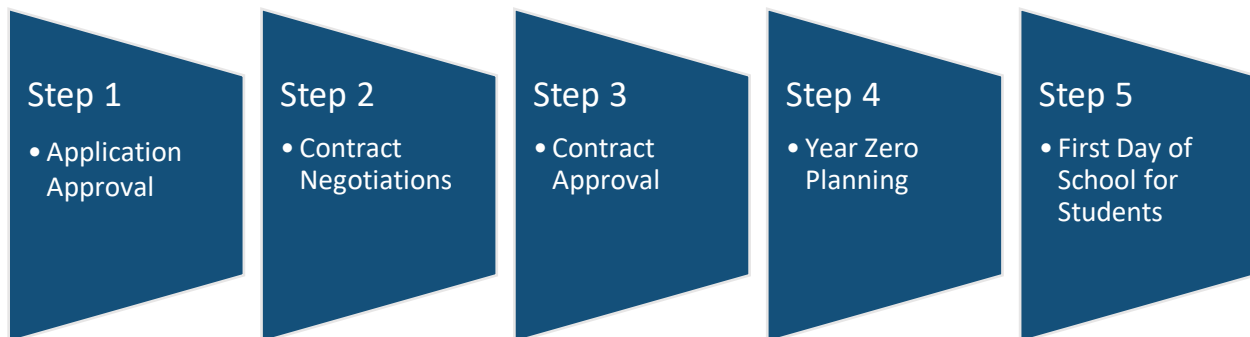
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Introduction

The purpose of developing a Year Zero guide is to provide district authorizers with a comprehensive overview and checklists during the planning year of a new charter school. Year Zero is the time after a charter application is approved and the first day the charter school opens its doors to students.



While the approval of a charter application is often seen as a major milestone, the true test of readiness occurs during the Year Zero period. This is the critical time when planning transitions into implementation, and both the authorizer and school must ensure that the foundational pieces are in place for a successful launch. From financial systems and staffing to facilities, safety, curriculum, and compliance requirements, every detail matters. The decisions and oversight activities carried out during this time frame can significantly influence whether a school begins its first year strong and sustainable or struggles to meet expectations.

For authorizers, Year Zero presents an opportunity to set clear expectations, establish consistent communication, and provide proactive guidance that supports the school while also protecting the district and community's interests. Having a structured guide not only streamlines oversight but also creates a shared understanding between sponsors and schools of what "ready to open" truly looks like. By organizing tasks and responsibilities into a comprehensive reference, this guide allows sponsors to anticipate challenges, monitor progress, and hold schools accountable to both the charter contract and state law.

This Year Zero guide is designed to assist new and seasoned authorizing Sponsors navigate through the essential activities required by Florida law and the Florida Standard Charter Contract. Additionally, this guide includes sample documents from Florida school districts, checklists, and tasks leading up to the first day of school for students.

The Year Zero guide was created in collaboration with FACSAs and its members who are committed to supporting and strengthening charter authorizing. This guide should not be considered as legal advice or as having any legal authority.

Disclaimer

The Year Zero Guide is intended as a resource to support authorizers and districts in navigating the opening year of a charter school. While the Guide references statutory requirements and best practices, many of the items included are suggestions and guidance rather than mandates. Districts retain autonomy in determining how and when to implement processes or accomplish specific goals outlined in this Guide. This resource is not prescriptive and should be adapted to fit the unique needs, policies, and circumstances of each district and school.

Section 1: Pre-Opening Checklist, MSID Application, and Financial Reporting

Sponsors can begin authorizing practices following the approval of a charter contract by offering a Pre-Opening checklist to the charter school. The Pre-Opening checklist is their guide to accomplish and validate all requirements prior to the first day of school for students. Pre-Opening checklists contain numerous tasks, so providing the checklist early on is helpful to the charter school. Many authorizing Sponsors may check-in on the charter school's progress throughout their year zero planning period and may also require the Pre-Opening checklists to be signed by the school administrator and submitted to the district charter office.

[A Master School Identification application](#) (MSID) must be completed by the charter school and signed by the district Superintendent before it is submitted by the school district. Due to the comprehensiveness of the application and submission process, it is important to allow sufficient time to apply for an MSID number. Monthly charter school financials are required by [Florida Statute](#) and must begin submitting the required financial documentation to the Sponsor upon contract approval.

[The Florida Department of Education](#), in conjunction with the [Florida Charter Institute](#), offers training courses to new charter operators, but it is the discretion of the Sponsor and the charter school to identify and acknowledge all state requirements as well as district-specific deadlines.

Pre-Opening Checklist

- The Sponsor has provided a Pre-Opening checklist for operation of a charter school within the District.

MSID Application

- The Sponsor has submitted a Master School Identification (MSID) application for the new charter school within 30 days of application approval

Submission of monthly financials as described in F.S. 1002.33

- The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the monthly financial submission process.

[The Florida Standard Contract IEPC-SC](#), Section 1.B.3 states “The School cannot open absent submission of all required Pre-Opening documents as specified in Section 11 of this Charter.” The pre-opening documents taken from Section 11 of the standard contract are shown below.

“The Sponsor and School shall agree upon submission deadlines for the following required documents.”

1.	Policies and Procedures Manual
2.	List of members of the Governing Board and Principal, including current contact information.
3.	Facility [zoning, certificate of occupancy, fire inspection, etc.]
4.	Other <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Current lease or ownership documentsb. Copy of current insurance certificates or policies for all types of insurance required by the charterc. List of current staff members including certifications and teaching assignments for teachersd. Documentation of fingerprinting of all staff and Governing Board members

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Student Code of Conduct f. Updated list of currently registered students g. Contract for transportation rates and services or transportation plan, if applicable. h. Letter specifying that the School [will adopt/not adopt] the district reading plan i. Tentative dates and times of the meetings of the Governing Board for the first year j. Crisis Response Plan k. Dismissal policies and procedures l. School's parental contract, if applicable m. Student Progression Plan (if different from District's)
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Additional Pre-Opening Items

The Sponsor has provided Addendum 1 (Facilities checklist) , which includes the facility requirements as identified in F.S. 1002.33 (18).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided Addendum 2 (State and Federal laws) , which include all of the current statutory requirements for the start of charter school operation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a School Board approved contract, which includes the approved application.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a website compliant with F.S. 1002.33(9)(p)1-2. This includes the posting of the charter school's governing board approved Controlled Open Enrollment Process. [F.S.1002.31(2)(b and d)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has posted the preliminary out of field teachers on the charter school's website. [F.S. 1012.42(2) and F.S. 1002.33(12)(f)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has disclosed the qualifications of their teachers to parents. [F.S. 1002.33(12)(f)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has reviewed Chapters 1000-1013 Florida Education Code to determine which legislation they would be adopting [otherwise exempt as described in F.S. 1002.33 (16)(a)-(b)].	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has reviewed the requirements of maximum class size (except the calculations for compliance pursuant to s. 1003.03 shall be the average at the school level). [F.S. 1003.03]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has reviewed the requirements regarding instructional contracts for personnel hired on or after July 1, 2011. [F.S. 1012.335]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>The charter school has the required Labor Law posters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) -Florida and Federal Minimum Wage • Reemployment Assistance Laws of Florida (USERRA) • Nondiscrimination in Employment Law • Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law • Respect and Civility Statement • Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 <p>[F.S. Section 448.10, s.1000.05, s. 1001.41(2), Federal Law]</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

The charter school has a detailed Curriculum Plan in place. [F.S. 1002.33(6)(a)2, s. 1002.33(6)(a)4, s. 1002.33(7)(a)2, s. 1002.33(7)(a)4]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has an understanding of adequate provisions to serve students with disabilities (ESE) and must comply with all federal and state laws relating to IDEA, Section 504, and ADA. [F.S. 1002.33(16)(a)3, s. 1002.33(10)(f)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the charter school adopted positive behavior interventions and supports and identified all school personnel authorized to use the interventions and supports? F.S. 1003.573 (4)(a)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a plan for monitoring student performance assessment and an evaluation has been created/adopted. [F.S.1002.33(6)(a)2; s.1002.33(7)(a)3; s.1002.33(7)(a)4; s.1002.33(7)(a)5]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Additional samples of Pre-Opening checklists from other school districts can be found by clicking on any of the provided links below or by visiting [FACSA's resource library](#).

- 1) [Broward County Pre-Opening Checklist Sample](#) and [Explanation of Pre-Opening Documentation](#)
- 2) [Duval County Pre-Opening Checklist Sample](#)
- 3) [Miami-Dade County Pre-Opening Checklist Sample](#)

Section 2: Organizational Requirements

Governing Board Background Screening

Members of the governing board must complete the background screening process prior to serving as a board member. Governing board members are also held to the same background screening requirements as any new employee serving in an educational capacity.

The governing board has completed their background check requirements. [F.S. 1002.33(12)(g)1.]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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Governing Board Training

New governing board members must complete governance training within 90 days of their appointment per Florida Administrative Code [Rule 6A-6.0784](#).

The governing board members have received governance training. [F.S. 1002.33(9)(j)5; F.A.C. 6A-6.0784]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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The following documentation must be given to the Sponsor prior to the school's opening.

The governing board has developed their Articles of Incorporation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The governing board has received their 501(c)3 status. [F.S. 1002.33 (12)(i.)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The governing board names, contact information, and parent representative are listed on the charter school's website. [FL Standard Contract IEPC-SC Section 11A.]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has purchased insurance coverage that includes the minimum limits of liabilities. For owned facilities, this includes property insurance. [F.S. 1002.33(7)(a).11.]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 3: Financial Oversight

Once the charter contract is approved, Sponsors must develop a method for charter schools to present a monthly financial statement during their planning year.

A charter school shall, upon approval of the charter contract, provide the Sponsor with a concise, uniform, monthly financial statement summary sheet that contains a balance sheet and a statement of revenue, expenditures, and changes in fund balance. [F.S. 1002.33(9)(g.)3.]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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During the year zero planning period, Sponsors may offer some guidance using a timeline to generate and submit proper financial documentation.

The Sponsor has provided a schedule of Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) payments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the stipend reimbursement process and training for federally funded grants.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the process for setting up vendor accounts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the monthly financial submission process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Chief Financial Officer/Finance manager of the charter school has provided the Sponsor with ACH deposit information (ex: Bank account, etc.) for Accounts Payable.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has submitted requests for personnel access to vendor supplies/warehouse supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
For charter schools that are a sub-grantee under the Public Charter School Program (CSP) grant, the Sponsor has provided information on the reimbursement and amendment (Program or Budget) process. The Sponsor has also provided the District's Finance/Grant contacts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has obtained a letter of engagement from their independent financial auditor for the annual financial audit report and provided to the Sponsor.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has submitted a letter of credit to the Sponsor for supplemental sources of funding (as applicable).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 4: School Operations

Charter schools should be working toward finalizing and approving their school operation process and procedures during the year zero planning period. Sponsors can expect a confirmation of the following tasks before school begins.

The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the teacher certification review/reporting requirements which include reporting to the governing board, letters to parent/guardians, notifications to teachers, and state reporting procedures during survey periods.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The governing board of the charter school has approved it's complaint/grievance process and it is posted on the charter school's website.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established Human Resources policies and procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a governing board approved Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan. [F.S. 1012.34]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established a compensation and salary schedule for their employees. [F.S. 1012.22(1)(c)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has reviewed the statutory workforce reduction requirements. [F.S. 1012.33(5)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a governing board approved/adopted Student Code of Conduct [F.S. 1006.07(2)] and has clear policies on which incidents require consultation or referral to law enforcement [F.A.C. 6A-10018, Subsections (11), (19), and (20)].	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has governing board approved policies and has posted this information on its website for compliance with Federal requirements. [F.S. 1000.05 Discrimination]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established standards and protocols for communication (i.e. public records requests, school messaging, point of contact for press). [Chapter 119]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has employed administration and staffing for adequate school operation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has received access to the Sponsor's Employee Management System or has a system in place.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established governing board non-discrimination policies and has posted a notice of non-discrimination in a clear location on the charter school's website. [F.S. 1000.05, Florida Educational Equity Act]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established a governing board approved Employee Handbook to share with respective staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's governing board has adopted policies establishing standards of ethical conduct for educational support employees, instructional personnel, and school administrators. [F.S. 1002.33(12)(g)(3.)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 5: Accountability During Year Zero

Before the beginning of every school year, charter schools should receive information about what to expect during the state assessment period. For example, Kindergarten students will undergo their FAST Star Early Literacy *within* the first 30 days of school, so it is important for charter schools to prepare for various state assessments throughout the school year.

The Sponsor has provided their Assessment schedule to the charter school for the upcoming school year and testing coordinator identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school administration and staff have completed the required training for administering the required statewide assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's administration and assessment coordinator have received access to the statewide assessment portal and data for their respective students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 6: Sponsor Procedures During Year Zero

Authorizing Sponsors have already developed internal processes and procedures to support new charter schools prior to opening. Sponsors and charter schools can collectively accomplish these tasks through checklists, site visits, and check-ins. The checklist below contains some examples; however, the list may also differ depending on the school district.

The Sponsor has provided the District point of contact list for respective areas (Student Supportive Services, ESE/ESOL, etc.) and communication process to reach out to respective Departments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the District's schedule/calendar for compliance items (ex: annual performance goals, Mental Health plans, student enrollment counts, elected services, important deadlines, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with their Guide to Services and Fees (or equivalent) which includes notification of those services received under the administrative fee withheld. [F.S. 1002.33(20)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the Pre-Opening checklist.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with a site visit schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided information on how to set up e-mail addresses for charters school employees.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with Instructional Technology (IT) services.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has attended a Principals/Directors meeting prior to the start of the school year, optional. (varies by district)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's administration has reviewed their charter contract, statutory requirements, projected enrollments, and assessment schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's administration staff/designees have completed training, where applicable. (varies by district)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has provided the Sponsor with the administration's emergency contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has received access and information related to Professional Development activities available to the charter school (i.e., or federally funded).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 7: Students

To promote a positive learning experience for students, charter schools may develop student specific documents such as Code of Conduct, Student Progression Plan, and an ELL plan, to name a few. It is possible that the charters may elect to follow the some of their Sponsors plans which may have been discussed during contract negotiations and outlined in a charter contract.

The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) procedures and coding in the student data management system. [F.S. 1006.07(9), F.A.C. 6A-1.0017]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided the charter school with the process for Recommendation for Expulsion/Disciplinary Alternative Placement (DAP) Procedures Administrative Action Steps.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor has provided an itinerant area of assignments for those supportive services provided by the Sponsor (e.g., Social Worker, School Psychologist, School Nurse, etc.) under the administrative fee withheld.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has an established/adopted governing board approved Student Progression Plan or adopts the district plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has an established/adopted governing board approved Student Code of Conduct or adopts the district plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has reviewed the Florida Standards and aligned course expectations/local assessments to these standards.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has an established/adopted English Language Learners (ELL) Plan following all state and federal guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified and designated trained/qualified staff to provide Health Services to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has purchased/acquired their Sharps container, locking medication cabinet, and other mandatory items required for medication storage and removal. [F.S. 1002.33(16)(a)5, 1006.062, F.S.]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified a process/plan for entering and monitoring student enrollment information throughout the school year.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has developed an enrollment packet that includes a Home Language Survey in several languages.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 8: School Safety Requirements

Charter schools must create a secure environment for all students and staff to satisfy the provisions applicable to the [Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act](#). It is the responsibility of both the Sponsor and charter school to comply with the following conditions set forth by state law.

The charter school has established policies/procedures and resources that comply with Marjorie Stoneman Douglas and statutes related to school safety [F.S. 1006.12, F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)11; s. 1002.33(16)(b)8, 12, and 14; F.S. 1006.07(4)(c); and F.A.C. 6A-1.0018]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has an established check-in program to scan driver's licenses to screen as to whether visitors are on the sexual predator list and has an established/adopted procedure to determine if volunteers and employees meet the fingerprint background and screening requirements. [F.S. 1012.465; s. 1012.467; s. 1012.468; s. 1022.33(12)(g)(1); s. 1012.32(b)(1 and 2)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified their Florida Schools Safety Portal (FSSP) contact(s) and submitted this to the Sponsor. Additionally, the charter school has been added in the system and the contacts have received access to the Florida Schools Safety Portal (FSSP). [F.S. 1001.212(6)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a plan to utilize a mobile panic alert system that connects to a real time crime center. [F.A.C. 1.0018, Section 8 (Alyssa's Alert)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified their Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool (FSSAT) contact(s) and submitted this to the Sponsor. Additionally, the charter school has been added in the system and the contacts have received access to the FSSAT. [F.S. 1006.07(6)(a)(4); F.A.C. 6A-1.0018(10) and (19); F.S. 1006.1493]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a governing board approved Harm Prevention and Threat Assessment. [F.S. 1006.07(7)] which includes the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG). [F.A.C. 6A-1.0018 subsections (10) and (19)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has conducted the First Responder/Law Enforcement Agency tour of the charter school's site (every 3 years thereafter). [F.S. 1006.07(4)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has incorporated a mobile suspicious activity reporting tool (ex: Fortify FL). [F.S. 943.082(4)(b); F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Subsections (9) and (19)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified their Fortify FL contacts and submitted this information to the Sponsor.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's staff and administrators have completed the following training: 1) Active Assailant situation training including local Law Enforcement [F.S. 1006.07 (4)(b)(1), F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Subsections (15) and (19)]; 2) Youth Mental Health Awareness and Assistance [F.S. 1012.584]; 3) Annual Bullying and Harassment Prevention [F.S. 1006.147]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has a governing board approved/adopted Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Procedures. [F.S. 1006.07(4)(a)-(b)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 9: Facilities

Whether a charter school is in a new facility or leasing an existing building, there are State requirements to be fulfilled before the school can open its doors. It is imperative that Sponsors are aware of the provisions set forth by statute and state laws.

The Sponsor has provided the charter school with a copy of the Interlocal Agreement (as applicable) as an election option to fast track the permitting, permissions, and approval process for vertical/horizontal construction projects.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has purchased the required insurance coverages for operation. If the facility is owned, the charter school has purchased property insurance. [F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)(11)] See Addendum 1 (Facilities checklist).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has provided the Sponsor with a copy of their Lease Agreement or mortgage, if applicable.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has received the required facility inspections and passed all areas. [F.S. 1002.33(18)] See Addendum 1 (Facilities checklist).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has received their Certification of Occupancy as defined by F.S. 1002.33 (7)(a)13. See Addendum 1 (Facilities checklist).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has provided documentation on all environmental testing (includes Radon, Lead in water, and asbestos).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has posted the state motto "In God We Trust," which is located in a conspicuous place in each building. [F.S. 15.0301]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Additional samples of facility checklists can be found by clicking on the links below or by visiting [FACSA's resource library](#).

- 1) [Broward County Explanation of Pre-Opening Documentation](#)
- 2) [Hillsborough County Facilities Checklist Sample](#)

Section 10: Transportation

Transportation services may not be offered in many school districts; however, state statute requires that there be no barriers for students to equal access [F.S. 1002.33 (20)(4)(c)]. Sponsors should prepare to review transportation plans and contracts that focus on strategies to ensure students are able to attend a charter school without limitations. The checklist below pertains to charter schools that provide student bus services.

The Sponsor has provided the charter school with FTE Transportation ridership reporting and claiming procedures under the Survey windows.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has established a Transportation Plan to ensure transportation is not a barrier and identified the reasonable transportation distance (beyond a 2-mile radius from the school). [F.S. 1002.33(20)(c); s.1012.45; s. 1006.10, Chapter 1006-subpart I.E., ESE s.1002.33(9)(d) and s. 1003.01(12)]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school bus drivers have received the required certification/training. <i>This includes a Valid Florida CDL license, DMV License check, Pre-employment and annual physical, Dexterity Test, Fingerprinting/Background checks, Pre-employment drug testing, School Bus Operator class, Annual In-service training.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has purchased the proper insurance coverage and minimum limits of liability.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school bus(es) has received the required state quarterly and monthly inspections as identified by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has identified the parent/guardian and bus transportation drop-off/pick-up traffic procedures and patterns to ensure safety and security for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
School Bus Operators received notification of OTETA Random Drug Testing. [49 CFR Part 40, F.S. 1006.25]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 11: Food Services

If a Sponsor does not offer food service contracts, it is important that before school opening, the charter school has developed a plan to serve meals to their students, regardless of income status. Charter schools who choose to apply for the [National School Lunch Program](#) (NSLP) should be aware of the long and lengthy process to receive the endorsement. The NSLP application and approval timeline may take anywhere from several months to an entire school year in some cases.

The charter school has established a Food and Nutrition Services contract with the Sponsor/vendor under the National School Lunch Program and received reporting requirements from the Food Service Authority (FSA) [F.S. 1002.33 (20)(a)1]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school has provided contracted services for food service if it chooses not to apply for the National School Lunch Program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 12: State Resources

FACSA has provided a list of State resources for quick access to various Florida specific model forms, reporting, as well as a point of contact directory to the School Choice Office.

Public Charter School Program (CSP) Grant https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-program-grant/
Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Charter School Resources https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/
FDOE State, Rules, Model Forms https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-reference/
FDOE Frequently Asked Questions https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-faqs.stml
FDOE Charter School Capital Outlay Funding https://www.fldoe.org/finance/fco/charter-school-capital-outlay/
FDOE Funding and Financial Reporting https://www.fldoe.org/finance/fl-edu-finance-program-fefp/
FDOE Charter School Reports https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-program-reports/
FDOE Interactive Reporting https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/accountability-reporting/interactive-reporting/
FDOE School Grades https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/accountability-reporting/school-grades/
School Choice Contact Directory https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/contact-us.stml

Section 13: Year Zero and Contract Deferral

Charter schools may determine during their Year Zero planning period, that they are not ready to open and have elected to defer their school opening. The checklists below outline a few tasks during a contract deferral if the contract is fully executed or not.

The charter contract is **NOT** approved and executed:

The Sponsor requests that the approved applicant keep contact information up to date.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor sends enrollment projections to the charter school each fall with a required response. <i>This will help the Sponsor act on contract negotiations or respond with additional deferral notice information.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor remains in contact with the charter school periodically.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school provides the Sponsor with contact information of their new administration staff to be included in district communications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school submits a formal written notice of their intent to defer the opening of the school's operations. [F.S 1002.33 (6)(8)(c)5]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

The charter contract **IS** approved and executed:

The Sponsor sends enrollment projections to the charter school each fall with a required response.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The Sponsor remains in contact with the charter school periodically.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school submitted a formal written notice of their intent to defer the opening of the school's operations. [F.S 1002.33 (6)(8)(c)5]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
A charter school shall, upon approval of the charter contract, provide the Sponsor with a concise, uniform, monthly financial statement summary sheet that contains a balance sheet and a statement of revenue, expenditures, and changes in fund balance. [F.S. 1002.33 (9)(g.)3]	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school provides the Sponsor with contact information of their new administration staff to be included in district communications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school submits updates on the school facility using the Facilities Checklist. See Addendum 1 (facilities checklist).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The charter school's administration staff/designees have completed training under the Compliance Database Management System (i.e. Anvilar, Charters.Link, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 14: Sample Authorizing Calendar

This authorizing calendar is an *example* of the various monitoring practices throughout a calendar year. These activities will vary by district Sponsor.

July	August	September	October	November	December
Pre-Opening Site Visits	Board Approves Charter Contracts	Provide notice to charter with process/timeline for renewal	Academic Achievement Goals due (1 st year charters)	Renewal/High Stakes Review	School Improvement Plans
Contract Negotiations	Review Proposed Charter Budgets	School Improvement Plans	Academic Achievement Goals for remaining contract years due	Preliminary Projected Enrollment due	Finalize Application Timeline
	Charter Site Visits	Annual Audits Due	Review Academic Achievement Goals	New Applicant Orientation	
		Annual Reports	Begin Renewal Site Visits		
		Property Inventory	Financial Concern Meetings		

January	February	March	April	May	June
Train Charter Review Team	Monitoring Site Visits	Final Recommendations for New and Charter Renewal Decisions	Finalize Charter Application Reviews	Monitoring Site Visits	Final Enrollment Projections Due
Renewal/High Stakes Site Visits		Annual Enrollment Capacity Due	Charter Applications presented to Board	Intent to Renew Contract Letters	Scheduling for Next Year
State Accountability Report		Review Proposed Parent Contracts		Charter Applications Voted at District Board Meeting	Notify Schools of 5-Year High Stakes Review
		Capacity Interviews		Draft Contracts	

Addendum 1: Facilities Checklist

This checklist contains items charter schools can turn into their Sponsor for all school facilities.

- Current Lease or Ownership Documents (for new or amended facilities only)
- Current Certificate of Occupancy (for new facilities or additions only)-no later than 15 days prior to the start of school
- Current Certificate of Use- no later than 15 days prior to the start of school
- Fire Permit
- Copy of current insurance certificates for all types of insurance required by the charter. All insurance should be in the amounts specified in the charter. All certificates or policies must list the District as an additional insured.
- Property (Expiration _____)
- Fire Marshal Inspection Report (provide most recent)
- County Health Inspection Report (provide most recent)
- Florida Department of Health Operating permit
- A copy of detailed building plan (four months prior to the opening of school) including scope of work with timeline and cost estimates, project manager contact information and back-up facility plan.
- A Building floor plan indicating all rooms, corridors, doors, windows, and fire exits are posted in every occupied room. All rooms are labeled, and a Fire Exiting Path is indicated for each occupied space.

Please maintain the following for your records on-site:

- All necessary licenses, permits, zoning, use approval, facility certifications, and any other approval required by the local government or any other governmental authorities having authority at any time during the term of this Charter.
- All loans from the management organization to the School, such as facility loans or loans for cash flow, will be appropriately documented and will be repaid at a rate no higher than market rates at the time of the loan.

Florida Building Code: The School shall use facilities that comply with Florida Building Code, pursuant to Chapter 553, except for State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF). [Section 5 E.1., Florida Standard Charter Contract]

The School shall use facilities that comply with the Florida Fire Prevention Code [Section 5 E.2., Florida Standard Charter Contract]

The School's operation shall be subject to necessary local government approvals including site plan approval pursuant to F.S. 1013.33 and if applicable, review of traffic studies/analysis.

Addendum 2: State and Federal Laws

The table below contains a list of Florida Statutes that guide authorizing practices. Authorizing Sponsors can also access Florida Statutes by visiting [Statutes & Constitution :Search Statutes : Online Sunshine \(state.fl.us\)](http://Statutes & Constitution :Search Statutes : Online Sunshine (state.fl.us)).

Web links to State Rules and Federal Laws provide authorizers offer access to some of the most commonly known policies relative to student support and education.

<p>The charter school maintains a school website with the following provided to the public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about the school • Academic performance data • Governing board member names + parent representative & contact info • Board bylaws/operating rules • Programs offered • Management company / service providers / EMOs (if applicable) • Annual budget • Annual independent fiscal audit • Current school grade • Annual accountability report • Quarterly board meeting minutes • School capacity and controlled open enrollment plan • Anti-bullying and harassment policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33 (9)(p) • F.S. 1002.33 (9)(o) • F.S. 1002.33(9)(p) • F.S. 1008.34 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)16 • F.S. 1002.31(2)(b and d) • F.S. 1006.147
<p>The charter school is organized or operated by a nonprofit organization and has obtained 501(c)3 status.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33(12)(i)
<p>A Sponsor shall provide certain administrative and educational services to charter schools.</p> <p>A Sponsor may withhold an administrative fee for the provision of such services which shall be a percentage of the available funds defined in paragraph F.S. 1002.33(17)(b) calculated based on weighted full-time equivalent students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33(20) • F.S. 1002.33(20)(a)2
<p>The charter school has posted the Notice of Nondiscrimination in a clear location on the website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title IX • F.S. 1000.05-The Florida Educational Equity Act
<p>Equity Policies have been established and are included on the charter school’s website in a clear location. These policies should also include the name, title, and contact information for the Equity Coordinator/Manager.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1000.05-The Florida Educational Equity Act

<p>The charter school has posted the Preliminary “Out of Field” and letters sent to parents no later than 30 days prior to the start of EACH semester.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.42(2) • F.S. 1002.33(12)(f)
<p>The charter school shall be exempt from chapters 1000-1013 (Florida Educational Code), except as required by F.S. 1002.33 (16)(a)-(b). In general, these are aligned to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertaining specifically to Charter Schools • Student Assessment Program and school grading system • Provisions of services to students with disabilities • Civil Rights related to discrimination • Student health, safety, and welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1000-1013 (exempt) except as required by F.S. 1002.33(16)(a)-(b) • F.S. 1000.05
<p>A charter school should comply related to public meetings and records, public inspection, and criminal and civil penalties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 286.011 "Sunshine Law"
<p>The charter school will comply relating to public records.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 119
<p>The charter school will meet the requirements of maximum class size (except the calculations for compliance pursuant to s. 1003.03 shall be the average at the school level).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1003.03
<p>Requirements regarding compensation and salary schedules will be met by the charter school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.22(1)(c)
<p>Workforce reduction requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.33(5)
<p>Requirements regarding instructional contracts for personnel hired on or after July 1, 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.335
<p>The charter school has the required Labor Law posters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) -Florida and Federal Minimum Wage • Reemployment Assistance Laws of Florida (USERRA) • Nondiscrimination in Employment Law • Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law • Respect and Civility Statement • Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. Section 448.110 • Federal Law • F.S. 1000.05 • Federal Law • F.S. 1001.41(2) • Federal Law

Substantive requirements for instructional personnel and school administrator performance evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.34
The charter school will meet the Safe-School Officer Requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.12
The Governing Board has adopted a Behavioral Threat Assessment Policy and Procedures, which include the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(7) and 1001.212(12) • F.A.C 6A-1.0018, Subsections (10) and (19)
The charter school has formed a Threat Assessment Team at the school and hold meetings monthly at a minimum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(7) • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018 Section 10 and 19
The charter school has a governing board approved/adopted Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(4)(a)-(b)
The charter school has established policies/procedures and resources that comply with Marjorie Stoneman Douglas and statues related to school safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S.1006.12 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)(11) • F.S. 1002.33(16)(b)(8), (12), and (14) • F.S. 1006.07(4)(c) • F.A.C. 6a-1.0018
Reporting of School Environmental Safety Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(9) • F.S. 1001.212(8)
The charter school will receive access to the Florida Schools Safety Portal (FSSP).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1001.212(6)
The school has adopted an Active Assailant Response Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(6)(c)
The charter school has conducted the First Responder/Law Enforcement Agency tour of school site (every 3 years thereafter).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(6)(b)
The charter school will be using the Florida Safe School Assessment Tool, complete a School Security Risk Assessment by October 1 of each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(6)(a)(4) • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018(10) and (19) • F.S. 1006.1493
The school has adopted a Student Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(2) • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018 Subsections (11), (19), and (20)
The school has incorporated a mobile suspicious activity reporting tool (FortifyFL).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 943.082(4)(b) • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Subsections (9) and (19)
The charter school has a plan to utilize a mobile panic alert system that connects to a real time crime center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Section 8 (Alyssa’s Alert)

<p>The school has a detailed Curriculum Plan in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33(6)(a)2 • F.S. 1002.33(6)(a)4 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)2 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)4
<p>The charter school has created a plan for monitoring student performance, assessment, and evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33(6)(a)3 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)3 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)4 • F.S. 1002.33(7)(a)5
<p>The school has a clear understanding of providing equitable services to exceptional students and English Language Learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1002.33(16)(a)3 • F.S. 1002.33(10)(f)
<p>The state motto “In God We Trust” is located in a conspicuous place in each building.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S.15.0301
<p>Districts and charter schools are both required to establish/conduct School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) procedures and reporting to the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(9) • F.A.C. 6A-10017 • F.S. 1001.212(8)
<p>The Governing Board has established a policy or procedure for determining which incidents require consultation or referral to law enforcement (SESIR). The charter school may adopt the Sponsor’s policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Subsections (11) section (19) and (20)
<p>Staff and administrators have completed the following trainings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Assailant Situation training including local Law Enforcement. • Youth Mental Health Awareness and Assistance • Annual Bullying and Harassment Prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1006.07(4)(b)(1) • F.A.C. 6A-1.0018, Subsections (15) and (19) • F.S. 1012.584 • F.S. 1006.147
<p>The charter school has an established check-in program to scan driver’s licenses to screen as to whether visitors are on the sexual predator list and has an established/adopted procedure to determine if volunteers meet the fingerprint background and screening requirements. [F.S. 1012.468, F.S. 1012.32(b)(1 and 2)]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1012.465 • F.S. 1012.467 • F.S. 1012.468 • F.S. 1022.33(12)(g)(1) • F.S. 1012.32(b)(1&2)
<p>Each school district shall adopt positive behavior interventions and supports and identify all school personnel authorized to use the interventions and supports. Each school district</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F.S. 1003.573(4)(a)

shall develop policies and procedures consistent with this section.	
American Disabilities Act (ADA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Americans with Disabilities Act U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov)
Consent Decree (English Learner Students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules & Legislation (fldoe.org)
Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eoc.gov)
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) U.S. Department of Education
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov)
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statute Chapter 33 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Reemployment Assistance Laws of Florida (USERRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USERRA Overview (osc.gov)

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