

# Application for a Charter School Dorchester County Public Schools

Dorchester County Public Schools  
PO Box 619  
Cambridge, Maryland 21613  
410-228-4747  
[www.dcps.k12.md.us](http://www.dcps.k12.md.us)

**Dorchester County Public Schools  
Board of Education Members**

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The Dorchester County Board of Education does not discriminate in admission, access, treatment, or employment in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or any other basis prohibited by law.

Dear Prospective Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in applying to establish a public charter school in Dorchester County. Charter schools are public schools that operate under a charter, or contract, and are accountable to the Dorchester County Board of Education.

Charter schools are an exciting new aspect of the Dorchester County Public Schools. The purpose of charter schools is to provide parents and students an alternative means within the existing public school system for additional innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of students.

A charter school must focus on and demonstrate positive student achievement, strive for high academic standards, and be accountable for measurable results, or lose its charter.

The application to open a public charter school in Dorchester County includes a three-step process: 1) Letter of Intent, 2) Concept Proposal, and 3) Final Application.

If you have any questions regarding this application or the review process, please contact Dr. Lawrence Patterson at 410-228-4747. We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Frederic R. Hildenbrand  
Superintendent  
Dorchester County Public Schools

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## **Questions and Answers**

### **Definitions**

Q. What is a charter school in Dorchester County?

A. A charter school in Dorchester County means a public school that:

1. Is nonsectarian in all its programs, policies, and operations.
2. Is a school to which parents choose to send their children.
3. Is open to all students on a space-available basis and admits students on a lottery basis if more students apply than can be accommodated.
4. Is a new public school or a conversion of an existing public school.
5. Provides a program of elementary or secondary education or both.
6. Operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives.
7. Is tuition free.
8. Is subject to federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination.
9. Is in compliance with all applicable health and safety laws.
10. Requires students to be physically present on school premises for a period that is consistent with other public schools in Dorchester County.
11. Is accountable to the Dorchester County Board of Education.
12. Must comply with federal, state, and local requirements for all students, including those with disabilities.
13. Is created in accordance with the Public Charter School Policy and under the control of the Dorchester County Board of Education.

Q. May private or religious schools convert to public charter schools?

A. A public charter school may not be a private school, a parochial school or a home school.

Q. Can public schools convert to public charter schools?

A. Yes. Existing public schools designated to be restructured can convert to public charter schools.

### **Application Process**

Q. Who may apply for a charter?

A. Charter school applications may be submitted to the Dorchester County Board of Education by the staff of a public school (conversion), a parent or guardian of a student who attends a public school in Dorchester County, a nonsectarian nonprofit entity, a nonsectarian institution of higher education in the state, or any combination of the above.

Q. Will the Board of Education give preference to certain kinds of applications and applicant groups?

A. The Board of Education will give preference to those applications and applicant groups that demonstrate the greatest probability of creating public schools of the highest quality by meeting the comprehensive criteria of the rigorous application process. The Dorchester County Board of Education may also give preference to applications for charter schools located in low-performing areas of the county.

Q. Who will review and evaluate charter school applications and the capacity of applicant groups?

A. Each charter school concept proposal and final application will be reviewed by Dorchester County Board of Education as well as review panels comprised of individuals with education, business, non-profit, financial, legal, and organizational expertise. The Dorchester County Board of Education will interview the applicant groups that submitted final applications. The review board will make recommendations to the Dorchester County Board of Education. The Dorchester County Board of Education will make all final decisions.

Q. On what grounds may a charter application not receive approval?

A. Applications that are submitted after the deadline will be immediately rejected. Applications and the capacity of applicant groups to establish a successful charter school are judged on the totality of the application materials and the interviews. The Dorchester County Board of Education, however, is unlikely to award charters to applicant groups whose applications do not meet the stated criteria for a charter in the application, as corroborated in the interview of the applicant group by the Dorchester County Board of Education.

Q. Can the Dorchester County Board of Education's decision be appealed?

A. Yes. If the Dorchester County Board of Education denies the Charter School Application, the Charter Applicant can make appeal to the Maryland State Board of Education in accordance with the requirements of the Public Charter School Act of 2003.

Q. Are preferences given to applications for charter schools that plan to open the next school year?

A. No. Starting a school is a tremendous undertaking and an extraordinary opportunity. Experience in other states and counties has shown that taking the time to carefully develop a school's design is a great advantage.

Q. Is there a specified number of years for which a charter will be granted?

A. Yes.

Q. How are charter schools held accountable to standards?

A. The charter school will meet current accountability provisions of Dorchester County Public Schools and all Maryland State Regulations. The public charter school must provide documentation to the Dorchester County Public Schools regarding fiscal accountability and performance on recognized academic measures as agreed upon in the charter.

Q. Can charters be revoked?

A. Yes, Charters can be revoked by the Dorchester County Board of Education. If the charter school 1) does not fulfill a condition imposed by the Board of Education in connection with the grant of the charter, 2) fails to comply with the charter or provisions of federal, state or local law, 3) fiscal condition is substantially deficient or presents a safety or health risk to building occupants, 4) academic condition is substantially deficient, or 5) facility no longer supports the needs of the educational program.

## **Funding**

Q. How are charter schools funded?

A. The Dorchester County Board of Education will disburse to public charter schools an amount of county, state and federal money that is commensurate with the amount disbursed to other public schools in the local jurisdiction. Additionally, surplus educational materials, supplies, furniture and other equipment may be given to the public charter school by the state or by the Dorchester County Board of Education.

Q. Will charter recipients be given start-up funding?

A. There are State funds available for 'start-up' costs associated with developing a public charter school.

Q. Are charter schools entitled to Federal funds?

A. Yes. Charter schools are eligible for Federal funds that go to public schools such as Special Education, Title I, and Safe and Drug Free Schools. Contact the Maryland State Department of Education for more information.

Q. May public charter schools charge tuition?

A. No. Public charter schools are public schools and may not charge tuition to residents of the jurisdiction where the school is located. As authorized by Maryland statutes and regulations, a local school system may charge tuition to out-of-district students.

### **Laws and Regulations \***

Q. Do charter schools serve students with special needs?

A. Yes. Charter schools may not discriminate on the basis of mental or physical disability, special need, or academic achievement. Charter schools must comply with all state and federal laws regarding the provision of special education services that apply to other public schools. Responsibility for any special needs student remains with the school district where the student resides.

Q. May we give our applicants an entrance exam?

A. No. Charter schools may create eligibility thresholds for enrollment that are consistent with their areas of focus or grade levels, but a school's methods for determining eligibility for enrollment -- including meetings, interviews, and recommendations -- cannot be designed, intended, or used to discriminate on the basis of a child's knowledge or skills. For instance, a charter high school may deny admission to students who have not completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade but it may not deny admission to students on the basis of their inability to do 8<sup>th</sup> grade level work. Diagnostic exams may be given once the students are enrolled.

Q. What are the certifications/training requirements of charter school teachers?

A. The professional staff of a public charter school must have the appropriate Maryland certification.

Q. Are public charter school personnel employees of Dorchester County Public Schools?

A. Employees of a public charter school are public school employees of Dorchester County Public Schools. Since a collective bargaining agreement is in place, the public charter school and the Dorchester Educators may mutually agree to negotiate amendments to the existing agreement to address the needs of the particular public charter school.

Q. How does the Federal No Child Left Behind Act affect Dorchester County charter schools?

A. Because Dorchester County charter schools are public schools, almost all the NCLB requirements are applicable to charter schools. See Federal NCLB web site at <http://www.nochildleftbehindact.gov> and the Maryland State Department of Education web site at <http://www.msde.state.md.us>.

Q. Can volunteers work in the public charter school?

A. Yes. All staff and volunteers in public charter schools must meet the required state and local background checks.

Q. Will public charter school staff receive professional development?

A. Public charter school staff will receive the same services as public school staff in Dorchester County unless otherwise indicated in the charter.

Q. Will public charter school students participate in assessments?

A. The measurement of student academic achievement must include all assessments required for other public schools and other assessments mutually agreed upon by the Dorchester County Board of Education and the public charter school.

Q. What types of resources are available on the Dorchester County Public School's web site?

A. Many resources are available on the Maryland Department of Education web site ([www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)) and the Dorchester County Public School's web site [www.dcps.k12.md.us](http://www.dcps.k12.md.us).

See the Resource List for additional information. The Dorchester County Board of Education encourages charter schools to visit the Department of Education and other web sites on a regular basis for updates.

\*Please see the Maryland State Department of Education's *Model Policy and Resources Booklet* for a more thorough explanation of the laws and regulations that apply to charter schools.



## **Model Application Process and Review Stages**

<b>Instructions</b>	All submissions should be prepared on plain 8 1/2 x 11" size paper that is suitable for reproduction. Brevity, specificity, and clarity are strongly encouraged.
<b>Deadlines</b>	The deadline for receipt of all materials to the Dorchester County Board of Education is 4:30 PM on the date indicated. Facsimiles will not be accepted and any application received after this time will not be considered (even if postmarked before the due date).
<b>Format</b>	Both the Concept Proposal and the Final Application should adhere to the following format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ no smaller than one-inch margins</li><li>❑ no smaller than 11-point font</li><li>❑ no 3 ring binders</li></ul>
<b>Templates</b>	Please note: Several templates and forms are provided with the application. These must be submitted along with the Concept Proposal and the Final Application.
<b>Where to Send Applications and Information</b>	Application Review for Charter Schools Dorchester County Public Schools Attn: Director of Operations PO Box 619 Cambridge, Maryland 21613 410-228-4747 <i>(Note: All documents submitted to the Dorchester County Board of Education become part of public record)</i>
<b>Letter of Intent</b>	Letter of Intent is due the first Monday in February An applicant group's letter of intent is due the first Monday in February. All interested charter school applicants are asked to notify the Board of Education of their intention to apply for a charter.
<b>Concept Proposal</b> Submit 10 copies and original copy. Please label the original signature.	The Concept Proposal is due by the last Monday in March. The proposal will describe the applicant's vision for the charter school and a Mission statement as to how the vision will be achieved. Specific action plans and strategies for developing and delivering educational programs and services must be included. The proposal will describe the desired educational results including student academic outcomes and how they will be measured. (See Concept Proposal Outline)
<b>Proposal Review</b>	The proposal will be reviewed by a committee and the Board of Education of Dorchester County against criteria described throughout the application process.
<b>Submission of Final</b>	Final Application is due by the first Monday in September.

## **Application**

### **Review of Final Application**

(September - November)

#### **Review by the Review Committee**

Each application will be reviewed by a review committee. The application will be reviewed and evaluated against the criteria described throughout the application.

#### **Review by the Dorchester County Board of Education**

The Final Application will be reviewed and evaluated by the Board of Education against the criteria described throughout the application.

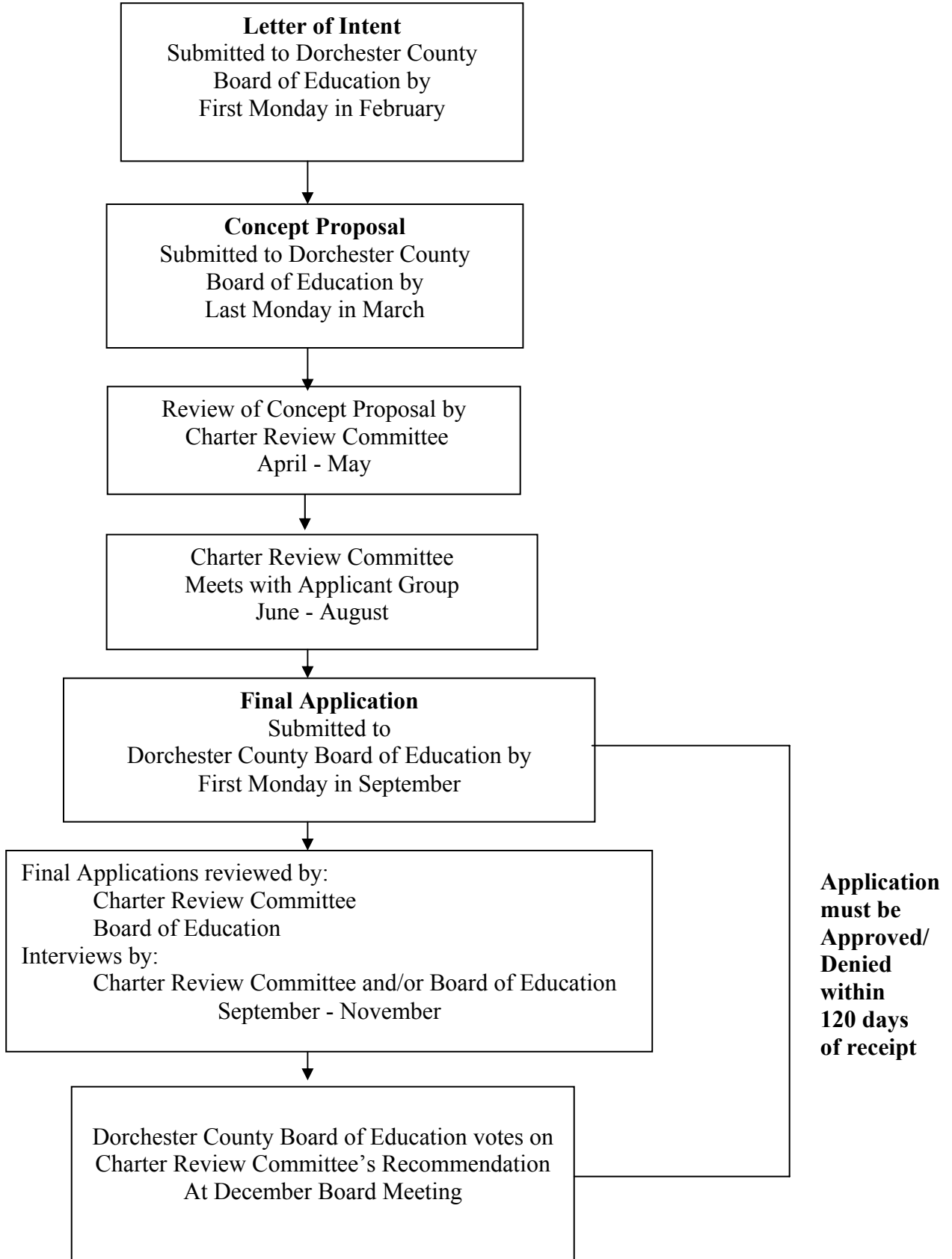
#### **Interviews**

Applicants will be interviewed by the Board of Education and/or a review committee. These interviews will be conducted by Dorchester County Board of Education staff and will be based upon the questions reviewers raised about an application. Applicant groups should be prepared to answer questions regarding all parts of the application.

### **Board of Education's Recommendation**

The Board of Education of Dorchester County Public Schools will vote to award a charter at the December Board of Education meeting. The Board reserves the right to grant a charter with the terms and conditions that it deems are appropriate, including, but not limited to, the opening date, grade span, and maximum enrollment of the school proposed.

## Model Charter School Application and Review Timeline



## **Letter of Intent Template**

*Applicant groups are required to send a Letter of Intent to the Dorchester County Public Schools by the first Monday in February. The Letter of Intent should not exceed two pages. Please submit the following information in the form below:*

**Date**

**Contact Person's Name**

**Mailing Address**

**City, MD Zip Code**

**Daytime Phone, Facsimile Number**

**E-mail Address**

**Dr. Frederic R. Hildenbrand, Superintendent**

**Application Review for Charter Schools**

**Dorchester County Public Schools**

**PO Box 619**

**Cambridge, Maryland 21617**

**Dear Dr. Hildenbrand:**

**Introductory sentence(s)**

**Provide a brief explanation of the mission and purposes of the proposed school.**

**\*name of proposed school (charter school must be in the name)**

**\*type of applicant (e.g., parent, teachers, nonsectarian-nonprofit, nonsectarian-higher ed)**

**\*proposed location of school**

**\*grade levels to be served**

**Enclose a one-paragraph description of the type of students to be served by the proposed school (targeted populations, at-risk youth) and the approach to curriculum and teaching (e.g., Core Knowledge, Montessori, and Coalition of Essential Schools, etc.).**

**Closing**

## Charter Applicant Information Sheet

**This sheet must be attached to the Concept proposal and the Final Application.**

**Name of Proposed Charter School** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Address (if known)** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Location** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Group Applying for Charter School** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Daytime Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The proposed school will open in the fall of school year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Grade Levels** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total School Enrollment** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dorchester County Public Schools  
Charter School  
Certification Statement**

**Proposed Charter School Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed School Location** \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; that this application has been or is being sent to the superintendent of the district from which we intend to draw students; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall 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, proficiency in the English language, or a foreign language, or academic achievement. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.**

**Signature of  
Authorized Person** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(please label copy with original signature)

**Print/Type Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Daytime Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Charter Concept Proposal OUTLINE**

*Please limit the Concept Proposal to no more than 20 pages of text (see format requirements) excluding the required attachments (see page 33), the cover page, the information sheet, the certification statement, and the executive summary.*

Cover Page

Information Sheet

Certification Statement

Executive Summary - No more than two pages

*Summarize the vision and the proposed school's mission and educational program, community need, and the founding group's capacity to make the school a success.*

Public statement

*Include a statement of 100 words or less summarizing your proposed school. This statement will be shared with the media.*

- I. CHARTER SCHOOL VISION AND MISSION**
  - A. Vision for the charter school**
  - B. Mission Statement as to how the vision will be achieved**
  - C. Statement of Need**
- II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**
  - A. Educational Philosophy**
  - B. Curriculum**
  - C. Assessment System**
  - D. School Characteristics**
  - E. Special Student Populations and Student Services**
- III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?**
  - A. Capacity**
    - 1. Governance structure**
- IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**
  - A. Resumes and Statements from Founding Group Members**

## CHARTER CONCEPT PROPOSAL

### I. CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION/VISION

#### A. Vision Statement

The Dorchester County Public School System has a Five-Year Comprehensive Master Plan that serves as a framework for accomplishing established goals for the education of its students. Please provide a thorough and detailed description of the founding group's vision for the proposed public charter school and how the school will seek to make a difference in public education and the community. Also, provide a description of how the proposed public charter school will address the School System's four goals, which are: 1) To establish high academic expectations for all children, particularly in the area of reading, writing and mathematics; 2) To provide a well-trained, caring staff with strong visionary leadership; 3) To encourage parent/family involvement in the schools; 4) To make our schools safe, disciplined and drug free.

#### *Criteria*

*Reviewers will look for:*

- *A detailed description of the founding group's vision for the school.*

#### B. Mission Statement

Provide a clear and concise statement that defines the mission of the school in one or two sentences. The mission statement should be written for a general audience and should indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the term of the school's charter. The mission statement should be the driving force behind and be reflected throughout all sections of the application.

#### *Criteria*

*Reviewers will look for a clear and compelling mission statement that:*

- ♦ *Is meaningful, measurable, and manageable;*
- ♦ *Is clear, focused, free of jargon, and consistent with high academic standards and student success;*  
*and*
- ♦ *Informs the public about the students the charter school intends to serve and how the charter school seeks to make a difference in public education and the community.*

#### C. Statement of Need

Maryland statute invites the creation of public charter schools to help introduce alternative means within the public school system to provide innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of all students.

**\*Explain the need for this particular school in the community it will serve and the target student population it will serve.**

**\*Clarify why a charter is necessary in order for this school to exist or succeed.**



### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look for:**

- *Compelling reasons why the proposed school is needed in the proposed area of service;*
- *A compelling description of the students the charter school intends to serve and the target population's unique need;*
- *A specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options currently available to the target student population;*
- *How the school will have positive impacts on the proposed community(ies) it will serve; and*
- *A description of why the school could not be implemented easily without a charter and/or other reasons why a charter is necessary in order for the proposed school to exist or succeed.*

## **II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

### **A. Educational Philosophy**

**\*Describe the educational foundation of the proposed school. Include in this description a discussion of the instructional methods to be used.**

**\*Describe how this educational theory aligns with your mission.**

**\*Describe the research on this educational theory and/or approach that demonstrates that it will result in high academic achievement for your anticipated student population.**

### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look for an educational philosophy that:**

- *Aligns with the school's mission and responds to the needs of the student population;*
- *Demonstrates that the educational program will meet the diverse needs of individual students;*
- *Shows evidence that this approach will lead to improved student performance; and*
- *Is founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices, teaching methods, and high standards for student learning.*

### **B. Curriculum**

**\*Provide a description of the curriculum that will be used by the school, including the content (what students should know) and skills (what students should be able to do) to be taught in the main subject areas (math, science, social studies/history, English) at each grade level. Up to four grade levels must be included in the text of application. Additional grade levels must be included in the attachments but will not be counted toward the page limit.**

**\*Explain the process the school will use to ensure that its curriculum is aligned with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum. You may provide an illustrative example of this alignment.**

**\*Explain how limited English proficient learners, disabled students, and students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a curriculum plan that:***

- ***Is research-based, engaging and consistent with the mission of the school;***
- ***Provides clear content and skills that are ambitious yet realistic for each grade or performance level;***
- ***Is aligned with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum; and***
- ***Will be appropriate for all students at all levels.***

### **C. Assessment System**

**An assessment system defines how teachers and administrators will measure what students know and are able to do in order to determine whether each student has mastered the curricular content and skills. Ultimately, an assessment system determines whether the school is an academic success. The proposed system should reflect how the school leaders will measure the academic progress of individual students, groups of students, and of the school as a whole.**

**\*Indicate whether, in addition to administering the Maryland State Assessments, state and local assessments as required by state law, county end of course assessments, the school will use additional standardized assessment tools to determine and report student progress. In either case, explain why that decision was made for the targeted population.**

**\*Describe how baseline achievement data will be collected and how it will be used.**

**\*Describe how the administered tests and results will be used to demonstrate student achievement. Include how assessment and achievement information will be reported. Indicate which audiences will receive this information and how often.**

**\*Describe which internal/school-developed instruments will be administered in order to measure and report student progress. Explain why these particular assessments were selected for the targeted student population.**

**\*Describe how assessment information will be used to improve instruction and student learning. Explain how assessment data will be used to plan staff development that will support the goal of improved student learning.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for an assessment system that:***

- ***Includes all state required measures***
- ***Includes all county level assessments***
- ***Includes descriptions and/or examples of assessments that are consistent with the school's mission, program, high expectations of students, and that are based upon solid research;***
- ***Features multiple measures of student outcomes that can be reported in terms of absolute scores, within-year student gains/losses, and year-to-year student gains/losses;***
- ***Will facilitate decision-making about necessary adjustments to the educational program; and***
- ***Provide a thorough, clear, measurable, externally credible, and conceptually sound design for measuring and reporting the performance and progress of the charter school and the academic and social development of each student.***

#### **D. School Characteristics**

**\*Describe the school calendar (including the number of days school will be in session), the daily hours of operation, and the way the school will be organized for instruction, independent study, and extra or co-curricular activities, if any. Please be specific.**

**\*Describe the implementation of the educational program in terms of the daily or weekly organization of students and faculty (e.g., multi-grade, tracking, team-teaching, etc.).**

**\*For illustrative purposes, please summarize a typical day from the perspective of a student in a grade level of your choice.**

**\*Describe the culture that will be developed in the school and any plans you have to create or implement this culture.**

#### **Criteria**

***Reviewers will look for a description of school characteristics that:***

- ***Are consistent with the proposed school's mission and education program;***
- ***Illustrate a thoughtful and academically rich use of time for students and teachers; and***
- ***Demonstrate that a school culture and norms, consistent with the school's mission, will be established.***

#### **E. Special Student Populations and Student Services**

**\*Describe any support services that will serve Limited English Proficient students beyond the regular education program.**

**\*Describe how the school will comply with state and federal special education requirements for serving students with disabilities, including the full range of services and placements that will be made available to those students.**

**\*Describe the school's procedure for identifying students with special needs, developing Individual Education Plans, and providing related services.**

#### **Criteria**

***Reviewers will look for:***

- ***A commitment to serving the needs of special populations of students;***
- ***A plan that reflects an understanding of the services and costs associated with providing high quality support for all students; and***
- ***Knowledge of the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding special education and students with Limited English Proficiency.***

### **I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE VIABILITY?**

#### **A. Capacity**

**\*Briefly describe how the founding group came together to form this school.**

**\*Explain how often the group meets and how the planning and writing process is being executed.**

**\*Please attach the resumes of each founding group member and note if a member is a proposed advisory board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other positions. Please summarize each founder's and/or proposed advisory board member's experience and qualifications**

briefly with the text of the document. (Resumes in the attachments will not be counted toward the page limit).

**\*Please attach a statement of no more than one page from each founding group member that highlights his/her interest in the school and the knowledge and experience he/she would bring to the proposed position if a charter were granted. Indicate any potential conflicts of interest. Attachments are not counted in page limit.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a founding group:***

- ◆ ***With the experience and qualifications, necessary to implement the proposal;***
- ◆ ***That demonstrates the capacity to establish and sustain an excellent school;***
- ◆ ***That can manage public funds effectively and responsibly; that includes members who possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development and law;***
- ◆ ***That is a broad, diverse representation from the communities the school will serve; and***
- ◆ ***That has tangible ties to the community the school will serve.***

#### **B. Governance Structure**

**\*Present an organizational chart and narrative. Be sure that the chart and narrative clarify the proposed reporting structure to the advisory board and the relationship of the Dorchester County Board of Education to the school's leader and administration regarding the governance and management of the school.**

**\*Briefly describe the recruitment, selection, and development plans for advisory board members.**

**\*If you are filing the application in conjunction with a college, university, or institution of higher education, or any other partner please provide the information below.**

- (a) Name of the organization;**
- (b) Name of the contact person at the organization with mailing address, facsimile number, and email address;**
- (c) A description of the nature and purpose of the school's partnerships with the organization; and**
- (d) How the organization will be involved in the governance of the school.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a practical governance model that:***

- ◆ ***Is consistent with the school's mission and program;***
- ◆ ***Is consistent with public accountability and the charter school law;***
- ◆ ***Clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the advisory board and the school staff; and***
- ◆ ***Establishes viable processes for policymaking and ongoing advisory board development.***

### **IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

#### **A. Founding Group Members:**

- ◆ **Resumes (note if a member is a proposed advisory member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other positions)**
- ◆ **Statements of interest and qualifications**
- ◆ **Content and skills for grade levels beyond the four grade levels required in the content of the application.**

## **CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION OUTLINE**

**The final application is limited to 50 pages of text, and 35 pages of required and optional attachments as well as additional required attachments that are not counted toward the 35 page limit. The cover page, information sheet, certification statement, executive summary, and statement of assurances are not counted toward the page limit.**

**Several sections of the Final Application ask for the same or similar information as the Concept Proposal -- these sections may be revised or expanded as necessary.**

### **Cover Page**

### **Information Sheet**

### **Certification Statement**

#### **Executive Summary - no more than two pages**

**Summarize the proposed school's mission and education program, community need, and the founding group's capacity to make the school a success.**

### **Public Statement**

**Include a statement of 100 words or less summarizing your proposed charter school. This statement will be shared with the media.**

### **I. Charter School Vision/Mission**

- A. Vision Statement**
- B. Mission Statement**
- C. Statement of Need**

### **II. How will the school demonstrate academic success?**

- A. Educational Philosophy**
- B. Curriculum**
- C. Promotion and Graduation Standards**
- D. Assessment System**
- E. School Characteristics**
- F. Special Student Populations and Student Services**

### **III. How will the school demonstrate organizational viability?**

- A. Enrollment and Recruitment**
- B. Capacity**
- C. School Governance**
  - 1. Governance Structure**
  - 2. Roles and Responsibilities**
  - 3. Policy and Procedures Development**
  - 4. Advisory Development**

**D. Management**

- 1. Management Structure**
- 2. Roles and Responsibilities**
- 3. Policy and Procedures Development**
- 4. Educational Leadership**
- 5. Human Resources**

**E. Facilities and Student Transportation**

**F. School Finances**

- 1. Fiscal Management**
- 2. Budget and Budget Narrative**

**G. Action Plan**

**IV. How will the school demonstrate that it is faithful to the terms of its charter?**

**A. Accountability**

- 1. Academic Performance Goals**
- 2. Organizational Viability Goals**
- 3. Proposed Process for creating accountability plan in first year**
- 4. Four-Year Vision**
- 5. Proposed Dissemination Plans**

**V. Attachments - no more than 35 pages**

## CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION

### CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION/VISION

#### A. Vision Statement

Provide a statement that captures the vision the founding group has for the proposed school.

##### *Criteria*

*The reviewers will look for:*

- ◆ *A vision statement that captures the uniqueness and vision of the founding group.*

#### B. Mission Statement

Provide a clear and concise statement that defines the mission of the school in one or two sentences. The mission statement should be written for a general audience and should indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the term of the school's charter. The mission statement should be the driving force behind and be reflected throughout all sections of the application.

##### *Criteria*

*Reviewers will look for a clear and compelling mission statement that:*

- ◆ *Is meaningful, measurable, and manageable;*
- ◆ *Is clear, focused, free of jargon, and consistent with high academic standards and student success;*  
*and*
- ◆ *Informs the public about the students the charter school intends to serve and how the charter school seeks to make a difference in public education and the community.*

#### C. Statement of Need

Maryland statute invites the creation of public charter schools to help introduce alternative means within the public school system to provide innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of all students.

**\*Explain the need for this particular school in the community it will serve and the target student population it will serve.**

**\*Clarify why a charter is necessary in order for this school to exist or succeed.**

### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look for:**

- *Compelling reasons why the proposed school is needed in the proposed area of service;*
- *A compelling description of the students the charter school intends to serve and the target population's unique need;*
- *A specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options currently available to the target student population;*
- *How the school will have positive impacts on the proposed community(ies) it will serve; and*
- *A description of why the school could not be implemented easily without a charter and/or other reasons why a charter is necessary in order for the proposed school to exist or succeed.*

## **II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

### **A. Educational Philosophy**

**\*Describe the educational foundation of the proposed school. Include in this description a discussion of the instructional methods to be used.**

**\*Describe how this educational theory aligns with your mission.**

**\*Describe the research on this educational theory and/or approach that demonstrates that it will result in high academic achievement for your anticipated student population.**

### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look for an educational philosophy that:**

- *Aligns with the school's mission and responds to the needs of the student population;*
- *Demonstrates that the educational program will meet the diverse needs of individual students;*
- *Shows evidence that this approach will lead to improved student performance; and*
- *Is founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices, teaching methods, and high standards for student learning.*

### **B. Curriculum**

**\*Provide a description of the curriculum that will be used by the school, including the content (what students should know) and skills (what students should be able to do) to be taught in the main subject areas (math, science, social studies/history, English) at each grade level. Up to four grade levels must be included in the text of application. Additional grade levels must be included in the attachments but will not be counted toward the page limit.**

**\*Explain the process the school will use to ensure that its curriculum is aligned with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum. You may provide an illustrative example of this alignment.**



**\*Explain how limited English proficient learners, disabled students, and students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.**

**\*Describe any plans for setting non-academic goals for students and creating a process for measuring progress toward their attainment.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a curriculum plan that:***

- ***Is research-based, engaging and consistent with the mission of the school;***
- ***Provides clear content and skills that are ambitious yet realistic for each grade or performance level;***
- ***Is aligned with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum;***
- ***Will be appropriate for all students at all levels; and***
- ***Includes non-academic goals for students.***

#### **C. Promotion and Graduation Standards**

**\*Provide examples of "exit standards" for all the school's grade groupings (e.g. elementary, middle, high school) in the areas of: Mathematics, English, Language Arts and Science. Exit standards should provide reviewers with a clear sense of what students in the last grade of each school level will know and be able to do.**

**\*Describe the proposed school's policies and standards for promoting students to the next grade, achievement level, or grouping level.**

**\*Provide an example of performance standards for a grade grouping of your choice to indicate how students will be graded. Performance standards should indicate to teachers, parents, and students the attributes that merit a particular letter grade or rubric score.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for promotion and graduation standards that:***

- ♦ ***Are specific, measurable, and ambitious, but attainable;***
- ♦ ***Are based on high expectations and are aligned with the school's mission, educational program, assessment system, and the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum;***
- ♦ ***Provide clear criteria for student promotion from one level to the next and for graduation; and***
- ♦ ***Provide clear performance standards for student assessment.***

#### **D. Assessment System**

**An assessment system defines how teachers and administrators will measure what students know and are able to do in order to determine whether each student has mastered the curricular content and skills. Ultimately, an assessment system determines whether the school is an academic success. The proposed system should reflect how the school leaders will measure the academic progress of individual students, groups of students, and of the school as a whole.**

**\*Indicate whether, in addition to administering the Maryland State Assessments, state and local assessments as required by state law, county end of course assessments, the school will use additional standardized assessment tools to determine and report student progress. In either case, explain why that decision was made for the targeted population.**

**\*Describe how baseline achievement data will be collected and how it will be used.**

**\*Describe how the administered tests and results will be used to demonstrate student achievement.**

**Include how assessment and achievement information will be reported. Indicate which audiences will receive this information and how often.**

**\*Describe which internal/school-developed instruments will be administered in order to measure and report student progress. Explain why these particular assessments were selected for the targeted student population.**

**\*Describe how assessment information will be used to improve instruction and student learning. Explain how assessment data will be used to plan staff development that will support the goal of improved student learning.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for an assessment system that:***

- ***Includes all state required measures;***
- ***Includes all county level assessment;***
- ***Includes descriptions and/or examples of assessments that are consistent with the school's mission, program, and high expectations of students, which are based upon solid research;***
- ***Features multiple measures of student outcomes that can be reported in terms of absolute scores, within-year student gains/losses, and year-to-year student gains/losses;***
- ***Will facilitate decision-making about necessary adjustments to the educational program; and***
- ***Provides a thorough, clear, measurable, externally credible, and conceptually sound design for measuring and reporting the performance and progress of the charter school and the academic and social development of each student.***

#### **E. School Characteristics**

**\*Describe the school calendar (including the number of days school will be in session), the daily hours of operation, and the way the school will be organized for instruction, independent study, and extra or co-curricular activities, if any. Please be specific.**

**\*Describe the implementation of the educational program in terms of the daily or weekly organization of students and faculty (e.g., multi-grade, tracking, team-teaching, etc.).**

**\*For illustrative purposes, please summarize a typical day from the perspective of a student in a grade level of your choice.**

**\*Describe the culture that will be developed in the school and any plans you have to create or implement this culture.**

**\*Describe the school's philosophy regarding student behavior and discipline for the general student population and special needs students.**

**\*Describe how the school plans to build and maintain family-school partnerships that focus on strengthening support for the school's goals**

**\*Describe how parental satisfaction will be gauged and the process for gathering and publicizing parental satisfaction results.**

**\*Describe the relationship the school intends to build with the community agencies and organizations that support the school's educational program and serve the youth that attend the school. Provide a specific update on the relationships you have established thus far. Letters of support may be included in the attachments.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a description of school characteristics that:***

- ***Are consistent with the proposed school's mission and education program;***
- ***Illustrate a thoughtful and academically rich use of time for students and teachers;***

- *Demonstrate that a school culture and norms, consistent with the school's mission, will be established;*
- *Encourage a safe and orderly environment for learning;*
- *Clearly indicate how parents can participate in their children's education; and*
- *Show how community agencies and organizations can benefit from student learning.*

## **F. Special Student Populations and Student Services**

**\*Describe any support services that will serve Limited English Proficient students beyond the regular education program.**

**\*Describe how the school will comply with state and federal special education requirements for serving students with disabilities, including the full range of services and placements that will be made available to those students.**

**\*Include your plan for offering special education supports and services in the regular education classroom (inclusion setting) and in a resource room as needed (pull-out).**

**\*Describe the school's procedure for identifying students with special needs, developing Individual Education Plans, and providing related services.**

**\*Describe your plan for staffing the special education program, including the number and qualifications of staff you propose to hire.**

**\*Describe your plan for addressing student health needs, including any counseling services or outreach that may be offered.**

**\*Describe your plan to provide a nutrition program at the school.**

**\*Describe the steps that the school will take to intervene before students become dependent on remediation or fail completely.**

**\*Describe your plan for working with advanced students to keep them challenged and engaged in their classes.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for:***

- *A commitment to serving the needs of special populations of students;*
- *A plan that reflects an understanding of the services and costs associated with providing high quality support for all students; and*
- *Knowledge of the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding special education and students with Limited English Proficiency.*

## **III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?**

### **A. Enrollment and Recruitment**

**\*Indicate the number of students to be enrolled each year and over the five-year term of the charter. Explain in detail your rationale for selecting the particular enrollment size for your school as well as the growth strategy you have developed.**

**\*Provide a description of how the founding group has assessed parental demand for the proposed school.**

**\*Describe how the school will publicize its program to a broad cross-section of prospective students throughout the areas the school plans to serve.**

**\*Describe the proposed enrollment process, including a plan for a lottery.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for:***

- ◆ ***Evidence of a significant demand among parents for the proposed school;***
- ◆ ***A continuing plan for aggressive and broad outreach and recruitment, including families that may be less informed about options;***
- ◆ ***A student admissions plan that ensures adequate enrollment and full accessibility of the school to all eligible students; and***
- ◆ ***A proposed enrollment process that is open, fair, and in accordance with the charter school statute and regulations.***

### **B. Capacity**

**\*Briefly describe how the founding group came together to form this school.**

**\*Explain how often the group meets and how the planning and writing process is being executed.**

**\*Please attach the resumes of each founding group member and note if a member is a proposed advisory board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other positions. Please summarize each founder's and/or proposed advisory board member's experience and qualifications briefly with the text of the document. (Resumes in the attachments will not be counted toward the page limit).**

**\*Please attach a statement of no more than one page from each founding group member that highlights his/her interest in the school and the knowledge and experience he/she would bring to the proposed position if the school is chartered. Indicate any potential conflicts of interest. Attachments are not counted in page limit.**

**\*Describe the intended relationship between the charter school and the Dorchester County Board of Education.**

#### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a founding group:***

- ◆ ***With the experience and qualifications necessary to implement the proposal;***
- ◆ ***That demonstrates the capacity to establish and sustain an excellent school;***
- ◆ ***That can manage public funds effectively and responsibly; that includes members who possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development and law;***
- ◆ ***That is a broad, diverse representation from the communities the school will serve; and***
- ◆ ***That has tangible ties to the community the school will serve.***

### **C. School Governance Structure**

#### **1. Governance Structure**

**\*Present an organizational chart and narrative. Be sure that the chart and narrative clarify the proposed reporting structure to the advisory board and the relationship of the Dorchester County Board of Education to the school's leader and administration regarding the governance and management of the school.**

**\*Briefly describe the recruitment, selection, and development plans for advisory board members.**

**\*If you are filing the application in conjunction with a college, university, or institution of higher education, or any other partner please provide the information below.**

- (a) Name of the organization;**
- (b) Name of the contact person at the organization with mailing address, facsimile number, and email address;**
- (c) A description of the nature and purpose of the school's partnerships with the organization; and**
- (d) How the organization will be involved in the governance of the school.**

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

**\*Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Board.**

**\*Outline the criteria and process the Advisory Board will use to work with the Dorchester County Board of Education in determining the school's leaders, faculty and other staff members.**

**\*Describe the process the Advisory Board will use to help evaluate the school's leaders, faculty and staff.**

**\*Describe the role distinctions between the Advisory Board, the school administration, and the Dorchester County Board of Education as they relate to curriculum, personnel decisions, budget allocation, and vendor selections.**

## **3. Policy Development**

**\*Describe the plan for seeking feedback from the school staff, parents and the larger community when setting procedures.**

**\*Indicate if legal counsel and an independent auditor have or have not been obtained. If not, describe what plans there are to do so.**

## **4. Advisory Board Development**

**\*Describe the orientation process for new Advisory Board members.**

**\*Describe the process the Advisory Board will use for its own evaluation and development.**

**\*Describe the relationship between the charter school and the school district.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a practical governance model that:***

- ♦ *Is consistent with the school's mission and program;***
- ♦ *Is consistent with public accountability and the charter school law;***
- ♦ *Clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Board and the school staff; and***
- ♦ *Establishes viable processes for policymaking and ongoing Advisory Board development.***

## **D. Management**

### **1. Management Structure**

**\*Describe the proposed reporting structure of all administrative positions and teachers.**

**\*Describe how the school will make key organizational decisions about curriculum and teaching, student achievement, fiscal planning, and operation.**

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- \*Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's leader and other administrative staff.**
- \*Articulate key role distinctions with regard to student achievement, personnel, financial management, and operations.**

## **3. Educational Leadership**

- \*Describe the process for the development, supervision, coordination, and continual assessment of the educational content and pedagogical approach of the school. Explain how the operations of the school will be continually aligned to support instructional goals and student achievement.**
- \*Describe how the principal or instructional leader will use student assessment data to improve instruction to lead to higher student achievement.**
- \*Explain how student assessment data will be used to plan staff development that will support the goal of improved student achievement.**

## **4. Human Resources**

- \*Indicate the number of faculty to be hired. Explain the process of determining job positions, roles and responsibilities.**
- \*Describe the school's plan for staff recruitment, advancement, and retention.**
- \*Explain how individual salaries and related increases will be determined. Describe how the faculty and administrators will be evaluated.**
- \*Describe plans for teachers, administrators, and other school staff to engage in professional development activities.**
- \*Describe the school's plan for staffing special education, including the number and necessary qualifications of special education staff.**
- \*Describe the qualifications and attributes of an ideal teacher for the proposed school.**
- \*Briefly describe the teaching program of typical teachers. Indicate approximately how many hours they will be in class and what other school-related responsibilities they will have outside the classroom (lunch duty, dismissal, advisory group, after school).**
- \*Indicate what role the Agreement between the Dorchester Educators and the Dorchester County Board of Education will play and how it will be honored. Summarize any specific provisions of the local collective bargaining agreement from which this charter school will be exempt. Modifications to this agreement that are made after the charter is granted will require approval from the Dorchester County Board of Education.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for a management system that includes:***

- ♦ A clear reporting structure and solid plan for making key school-level decisions on student achievement, fiscal planning and operation;***
- ♦ Clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for the school's leader and administrative staff;***
- ♦ Professional development opportunities for faculty and administrators;***
- ♦ A clear plan for evaluating and revising the curriculum;***
- ♦ A well-articulated plan for using student assessment data to improve instruction;***
- ♦ A staffing plan, hiring criteria, and evaluation procedures that are clearly aligned with the mission; and***
- ♦ Working conditions and compensation packages that will attract and retain high quality staff.***

## **E. Facilities and Student Transportation**

**\*Describe the viable options for a facility for this school and explain why these sites were chosen as possibilities.**

**\*If possible, provide a layout and description of the proposed charter school facility. Include the number and size of classrooms, common areas, and recreational space. Indicate an estimated timeline for identifying possible locations and securing financing.**

**\*Describe the financing plans and proposed budget for acquisition (purchase, lease, etc.) of a facility and any necessary renovations to it.**

**\*Describe how transportation services will be provided to eligible students.**

**\*Explain how students who are physically challenged will be transported and have access to the school facility in accordance with the state and federal law.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for evidence that the applicant group:***

- ◆ ***Has viable options for an adequate school facility in the proposed area of service;***
- ◆ ***Has financing options that are sound; and***
- ◆ ***Has a proposed transportation plan that will serve all eligible students.***

## **F. School Finances**

### **1. Fiscal Management**

**\*Explain who will manage the school's finances and how.**

**\*Describe the fiscal controls and financial management policies the school will employ to track finances in its daily business operations in order to maintain needed cash flow.**

**\*Indicate the dates when school district funds will be transferred to the school's account.**

**\*Describe the formula that will serve as the basis for calculating the district's payments to the school.**

**\*Indicate what specific services the Dorchester County Board of Education will provide and the cost of those services to the charter school.**

### ***Criteria***

***Reviewers will look for:***

- ◆ ***A fiscal management system that is appropriate, efficient, and follows generally accepted accounting principles and safeguards assets.***
- ◆ ***A financial arrangement with the Dorchester County Board of Education that ensures the charter school's autonomy over its school operations and ensures that the school receives funds as scheduled.***

### **2. Budget and Budget Narrative**

**\*Using the budget sheets provided, please indicate the schools' estimated expenditures and revenues from the school's startup phase through its third year of operation. To estimate annual tuition revenue, please use the current FY tuition rate.**

**\*Describe expense projections in detail and show the calculations of each line item in the operating budget with assumptions.**

**\*Summarize financial forecasts from the school's startup phase through its third year of operation. Financial forecasts may include total cash requirements, the time frame for positive cash balance, and the anticipated growth of the school. Define and give support for the assumptions behind projections.**

**\*Briefly describe any planned fundraising efforts and who will lead and coordinate these efforts.**

### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look for:**

- ◆ *A budget that is consistent with all parts of the proposal, including the school's mission, educational program, and human resources;*
- ◆ *Evidence that the budget demonstrates knowledge of the practical matters relevant to the operation of a school, is based on sound reasoning, and shows that resources will be consistently deployed to meet the school's goals; and*
- ◆ *A realistic assessment of projected sources of revenue that is adequate to ensure the fiscal viability of the school.*

### **G. Action Plan**

**The applicant group's Action Plan should:**

**\*Outline the steps and strategies and provide a clear timeline for opening the school from the date the application is approved to the first day of school. In a well-organized, easy-to-read chart, describe the action to be taken, the start date and projected completion date, and how responsibilities will be delegated and to whom.**

### **Criteria**

**Reviewers will look:**

- ◆ *For a strategy and timeline that will lead to a successful launch of the school;*
- ◆ *At the degree to which the action plan is specific and consistent with the proposal's objectives; and*
- ◆ *A designated point person and deadline for each task.*

## **IV. How will the school demonstrate that it is faithful to the terms of its charter?**

**In return for the freedom to create and operate a charter school, school founders are accountable for the performance of their students and the school. Accountability for results is a central component of the charter school policy in Maryland. The accountability and renewal process is based on the same three questions as the application:**

**Is the school an academic success?**

**Is the school a viable organization?**

**Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?**

**Please submit school-level goals that will serve as the basis for the accountability plan that a charter school must complete at the end of the first year of operation. The accountability plan defines the school's goals for student learning and organizational viability.**

### **A. Accountability**

**\*Summarize the school's important goals and associated assessments in the following two categories:**

- 1. Describe two or three school performance goals for student learning and the instruments and data that will be used to evaluate the progress toward achieving these goals. These goals should be related to student academic performance. Because the goals are to be accomplished by the end of the fifth year, provide benchmarks the school will reach along the way. In creating your academic performance goals, consider multiple measures. For example, you may establish**



goals for absolute scores in year one versus year five. You might also develop goals for your students' gains from year to year or in relation to their peers in the county. The goals and assessments should define the level of performance that students should achieve during their time in school and how the school faculty will know if it is achieving academic success.

2. Describe two or three school performance goals for organizational viability and the instruments and data that will be used to measure progress towards these goals. These goals should be for the school's management and its administrative structure and resources.
3. Please describe the process you will undertake in the first year of the proposed school to create an effective accountability plan. Include in this description who will be primarily responsible for overseeing and defining this process as well as for collecting and aggregating data.
4. In no more than two paragraphs, describe what you would like a renewal inspection team to learn about your school during their three-day visit in the school's fourth or fifth year.
5. Describe plans to define, evaluate, and disseminate best practices of the charter school to the Dorchester County Board of Education and more broadly to other schools in the county.

### **Criteria**

*Reviewers will look for:*

- ◆ *A genuine commitment to accountability for results and evidence of the competence to achieve those results;*
- ◆ *Compelling school performance goals that are consistent with the school's mission and program;*
- ◆ *School performance goals that are clear, measurable, and data- driven.*
- ◆ *A compelling snapshot of what successes the school may have in five years; and*
- ◆ *A viable plan for dissemination of best practices.*

### **V. Attachments (Limited to 35 pages)**

All attachments should be numbered and clearly referred to in the text. The choice of attachments is up to the applicant group, though attachments should be used to provide evidence, support a particular aspect of the application, or lend insight into the applicant group.

**Required and counted toward 35 pages:**

**Statement of interest and qualifications of each founding group member**

**Enrollment Policy**

**Additional Attachments of your choosing may be added up to 35 pages (including the above items)**

**Required but not counted toward 35 pages:**

**Resume from each founding member (note proposed position in the school if chartered)**

**The Curriculum for grade levels beyond the four grade levels required in the content of the application.**

**Statement of Assurances**

**Certification Statement**

**Information Sheet**

**Memorandum of Understanding**

## **Statement of Assurances**

**This form must be signed by the duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the Final Application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Statement of Assurances.**

**As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a charter for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of school) to be located at \_\_\_\_\_ is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that, if awarded a Charter, the school:**

- 1. Will not charge tuition, fees, or other mandatory payments for attendance at the charter school or for participation in programs that are required for students.**
- 2. Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely and complete application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case a lottery will take place in accordance with Maryland charter laws and regulations.**
- 3. Will be secular in its curriculum, programs, admissions, policies, governance, employment practices, and all other operations.**
- 4. Will be open to all students, on the 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, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement.**
- 5. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state laws relating to students with disabilities, including 20 U.S.C. §1400, et seq and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794.**
- 6. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state laws relating to students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP).**
- 7. Will comply with all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the requirement to administer the Maryland Assessments and offer a school nutrition program.**
- 8. Will submit an annual report, an accountability plan, and annual independent audit to the Dorchester County Board of Education by all required deadlines.**
- 9. Will submit required enrollment data to the Dorchester County Board of Education by the required deadline.**
- 10. Will operate in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles.**
- 11. Will maintain separate accountings of all funds received and disbursed by the school.**
- 12. Will participate in the Dorchester County Education Association and the Maryland State Teachers' Retirement/Pension System as applicable.**
- 13. Will employ individuals to teach that hold the appropriate certifications and meet all applicable staff requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Will employ individuals as special education service providers who are appropriately certified.**
- 14. Will provide the Dorchester County Board of Education with written documentation that criminal background checks have been performed on all employees of the school.**
- 15. Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health and safety within the building and on school property.**
- 16. Will provide school crises plan and emergency procedures plan.**
- 17. Will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.**

- 18. Will, in the event the charter school intends to procure educational services for the charter school through a contract with another person or entity, provide for approval of such contract by the Board of Education in advance of the beginning of the contract period.**
- 19. Will submit in writing to the Dorchester County Board of Education a request to amend its Charter if the school plans to make a change to its program or governance.**
- 20. Will provide to the Dorchester County Board of Education a school code of conduct, an enrollment policy, and a certificate of building occupancy prior to the opening of the school.**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

**Statement of Understanding  
Renewal and Revocation**

**This form must be signed by the duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the Final Application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Statement of Understanding.**

**As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a charter for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of school) to be located at \_\_\_\_\_ is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.**

**I understand the Dorchester County Board of Education may place the \_\_\_\_\_ Charter School on probationary status to allow the implementation of a remedial plan, pending a decision to revoke the school's charter.**

**I understand the Dorchester County Board of Education may revoke the contract between the Dorchester County Board of Education and \_\_\_\_\_ Charter School for the following reasons:**

- a. The school has failed to meet the terms of its Charter Agreement.**
- b. The school has not fulfilled a condition imposed by the Dorchester County Board of Education in connection with the granting of the charter.**
- c. The school has failed to comply with the Charter Agreement or provisions of federal, state, or local law.**
- d. The fiscal condition of the school is substantially deficient.**
- e. The academic condition of the school is substantially deficient.**
- f. The facility can no longer support the needs of the educational program.**

**I understand upon revocation, personnel and students shall be reassigned pursuant to Dorchester County Board of Education policy and procedures.**

**I understand upon revocation, resources provided by the school system shall remain under the supervision of the Dorchester County Board of Education.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### Budget Templates Pre-Operational Budget

A charter school is likely to incur considerable costs before it receives its first distribution. Prepare an estimated budget.

Revenue-Sources of Funding	Budget Amount	Specific Source
<b><i>Federal Funding</i></b>		
Start-Up Grant	\$	
Other (specify)	\$	
<b><i>State Funding</i></b>		
Other (specify)	\$	
<b><i>Local Funding</i></b>		
Fundraising	\$	
Contributions	\$	
Local Foundation and Grant Support	\$	
<b><i>Other Financing Sources</i></b>		
Lines of Credit	\$	
Loans	\$	
Other (specify)	\$	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$	
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>Assumptions (e.g., 40 hours of consulting at \$100/hour)</b>
Legal Fees	\$	
Accounting and Consultation Fees	\$	
Fundraising Fees	\$	
Marketing (including postage, printing)	\$	
Recruitment-Students	\$	
Recruitment-Staff	\$	
Curriculum Development	\$	
Staff/Board Development	\$	
Staff Stipends	\$	
Equipment and Supplies	\$	
Information Technology	\$	
Rent	\$	
Capital	\$	
Utilities	\$	
Telephone/Fax	\$	
Travel	\$	
Other (specify)	\$	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	\$	

Operating Budget: Projected Revenues and Expenditures				
<b>Charter School:</b>	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>
	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS</b>				
Student Enrollment				
Facility Size (square footage)				
Average Teacher Salary				
Student/Teacher Ratio				
<b>REVENUE</b>				
<i>Revenue From State Source</i>				
Per Pupil Tuition				
State Entitlements				
State Grants				
Transportation				
<i>Revenue From Federal Sources</i>				
Federal Entitlements				
Federal Direct Grants				
Federal Revenue Pass Through the Commonwealth				
Federal Revenue Pass Through Another Agency (specify)				
School Lunch				
<i>Revenue From Local Sources</i>				
Private Grant Revenue				
Fundraising				
Investment Income				
Program Fees				
Facilities Rental				
<i>Other Revenue</i>				
(Specify)				
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>				
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
<i>School Administration</i>				
Salaries and Wages - School Director				
Salaries and Wages - Supervisors				
Salaries and Wages - Clerical Staff				
Fringe Benefits - Health				

Insurance				
Fringe Benefits - Retirement Benefits				
Unemployment/Workers Compensation				
Office Supplies				

Equipment and Furniture				
Information Technology				
Purchased Management Services				
<b>Subtotal - School Administration</b>				

<b>Instructional Staff</b>				
Salaries and Wages - Full-Time Teachers				
Salaries and Wages - Part-Time Teachers				
Salaries and Wages - Substitutes				
Fringe Benefits - Health Insurance				
Fringe Benefits - Retirement Benefits				
Unemployment/Workers Compensation				
<b>Subtotal - Instructional Staff</b>				

<b>Instructional</b>				
Contract Labor - Instructional				
Consultants				
Purchased Management Services				
Professional Development				
Special Education				
Student Assessment/Testing				
Supplies/Materials - Instructional				
Classroom Furniture				
Equipment - Instructional				
Textbooks				
Information Technology				
Computer Supplies and Repairs				
Library				
<b>Subtotal - Instructional</b>				

<b>Business Services</b>				
Accounting				
Advertising				
Public Relations/Marketing				
Insurance - General Liability				
Insurance - Vehicle				
Insurance - Other (specify)				

Office Expenses				
Fees, Licensing, Dues, and Memberships				
Purchased Management Services				
Payroll Services				
Postage and Shipping				
Printing				
Telephone				
Travel				
<b>Subtotal - Business Services</b>				
<b>Operations and Maintenance</b>				
Contact Labor - Non-Instructional				
Custodial Services				
Maintenance - Vehicle				
Maintenance - Facility				
Maintenance - Office Equipment				
Supplies/Materials - Maintenance				
<b>Subtotal - Operations and Maintenance</b>				
<b>Physical Plant</b>				
Rent				
Mortgage				
Renovation/Construction				
Capital Debt Service				
Utilities				
<b>Subtotal - Physical Plant</b>				
<b>Student Services</b>				
Health				
Transportation				
Food				
Recreation				
<b>Subtotal - Student Services</b>				
<b>Miscellaneous</b>				
Audit				
Advertising				
Dues and Subscriptions				
Workshops and Conferences				
Fundraising				
Legal				
Contingency Fund				
<b>Subtotal - Miscellaneous</b>				
<b>TOTAL EXPENITURES</b>				



Explain how the projected per-pupil expenditures are aligned with the school's mission statement.


Operating Budget - Revenue Detail				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
Revenue Source				
Local				
State				
Federal				
Other				
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$	\$
Are any major changes in the revenue sources expected during this four-year projection? If yes, explain in detail and include calculations. Attach additional sheets if necessary.				
What contingency plans have been made if expected revenues are not received or are lower than budgeted?				

Operating Budget-Expenditure Detail				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
<b>Expenditure Function</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____
School Administration				
Instruction (Including Staff)				
Business Support Services				
Operations and Maintenance				
Physical Plant				
Student Services				
TOTAL				
Explain specific financial goals and objectives for the first four operating years (i.e. capital improvements, curriculum purchases, increased staffing needs, etc.)				
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
	_____	_____	_____	_____
Per Pupil Revenue (including all sources)				
Per Pupil Expenditures:				
Instructional				
Business and Administration				
Operations and Maintenance and Physical Plant				

Checking for AYP

To make AYP, schools, school systems, and the state must:

- 1. Meet the annual measurable objective:
  - in reading and in math, for students in the aggregate<sup>1</sup> and for each student subgroup.
  - in attendance and/or<sup>2</sup> graduation rate for students in the aggregate.
- 2. Meet the testing participation requirement of 95%.

Each cell in the table below represents an area in which

schools, school systems, and the state must make AYP. The answer must be “met” in all cells for a school to make AYP. However, if the minimum group size (N) is not met in a particular cell, then it is not checked for AYP, and the school automatically makes AYP in that cell. For reading and math performance, N = 5 students. For participation, N = 30 students for schools with one grade tested, 60 for schools with two or more grades tested, and 60 for local school systems.

In 2002-2003, the Maryland School Assessment was administered in reading to grades 3, 5, 8, and 10; in math to grades 3, 5, and 8; and in geometry to students enrolled in a high-school-level geometry course. In 2003-2004, the Maryland School Assessment will also be administered in reading and math to grades 4, 6, and 7. Scores for fourth-, sixth-, and seventh-graders will be reported but will not be included in AYP calculations until 2004-2005.

	Reading Performance & Participation on MSA & IMAP		Mathematics Performance & Participation on MSA & IMAP		Attendance <i>and</i> / or Graduation <sup>3</sup>
	Was the AMO met?	Was 95% participation met?	Was the AMO met?	Was 95% participation met?	Was the AMO met?
All Students					
American Indian/ Alaskan Native					Subgroup performance in attendance/ graduation rate is not a factor in determining AYP.
Asian/Pacific Islander					
African American					
White					
Hispanic					
Economically Disadvantaged <sup>3</sup>					
Limited English Proficient					
Special Education					

AMO = Annual Measurable Objective  
MSA = Maryland School Assessment  
IMAP = Independence Mastery Assessment Program

<sup>1</sup>Aggregate comprises all students whose performance is included in AYP calculations. See Including All Students section.  
<sup>2</sup>Schools must meet the AMO in attendance or graduation rate. School systems and the state must meet the AMO in both.  
<sup>3</sup>In Maryland, these are students who qualify for Free or Reduced-Price Meals (FARM).

## **GUIDELINES FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS REGARDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Charter schools must comply with all state and Federal laws regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities as found in the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and COMAR 13A.05 that apply to other public schools.

Implementation of the regulations will be in compliance with the Dorchester County Public Schools Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual, the Dorchester County Special Education Staffing Plan, and the MSDE Procedural Safeguards Parental Rights booklet regarding students with disabilities. Those requirements include:

- Provision and implementation of procedural safeguards
- Child Find
- Identification of students with disabilities, including pre referral interventions and screening procedures, referral, evaluation and reevaluation, eligibility, IEP development, IEP placement, including consideration of least restrictive environment
- Provision of services by highly qualified staff, including the provision of related services as required to meet individual student needs
- Discipline of students with disabilities
- Implementation of the Dorchester County Public Schools Special Education Staffing Plan

In addition, a charter school must comply with local procedures regarding:

- Submission of Special Services Information Systems (SSIS) data as required by the MSDE
- Implementation of Medicaid billing procedures as described in the Dorchester County Medicaid Manual
- Participation in the Special Education Continuous Monitoring for Improvement process
- Provision of high quality professional development opportunities regarding issues pertinent to special education.

In preparing a charter school application, a copy of or access to the Dorchester County Public Schools Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual, the Dorchester County Public Schools Special Education Staffing Plan, the MSDE Procedural Safeguards Parental Rights booklet, the SSIS Manual, the Dorchester County Public Schools Medical Assistance Manual, and MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletins will be made available upon request.

## RESOURCE LIST FOR CHARTER SCHOOL FOUNDERS

**Maryland State Department of Education**  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
[www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)

**Maryland General Assembly**  
[www.mlis.state.md.us](http://www.mlis.state.md.us)

**United States Department of Education**  
**Public Charter Schools Program**  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 3C148  
Washington, D.C. 20202-6140  
Phone 800 USA-LEARN Fax: 202-401-0689  
[www.uscharterschools.org](http://www.uscharterschools.org)

**National No Child Left Behind Act**  
**Impact on Charter Schools**  
[www.nochildleftbehind.gov](http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov)

**Education Week:**  
**Charter Schools**  
[www.edweek.gov](http://www.edweek.gov)

**National Association of Charter School Authorizers**  
1125 Duke Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
Phone 703-683-9701 Fax: 703-683-9703  
Email: [info@charterauthorizers.org](mailto:info@charterauthorizers.org)  
[www.charterauthorizers.org](http://www.charterauthorizers.org)

**Center for Education Reform**  
1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 204  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
Phone 800-521-2118 Fax: 202-822-5077  
Email: [cer@edreform.com](mailto:cer@edreform.com)  
[www.edreform.com](http://www.edreform.com)

**National Education Association**  
[www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)

**Charter Friends National Network**  
1295 Bandana Boulevard, Suite 165  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Phone: 651-644-6115 Fax: 651-644-0433  
Email: [info@charterfriends.org](mailto:info@charterfriends.org)  
[www.charterfriends.org](http://www.charterfriends.org)