



OKLAHOMA

Statewide Charter School Board

Guidance for Application for Authorization

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Introduction

The Oklahoma Statewide Charter School Board (SCSB) is an entity established to create a state authorizing agency responsible for the authorization and oversight of Oklahoma charter schools and virtual charter schools. The agency establishes procedures for accepting, approving, and disapproving charter school applications. The purpose of the *Guidance for Application for Authorization* is to outline the process by which the SCSB accepts, reviews, and considers the applications of entities wishing to open a charter school or virtual charter school in the State of Oklahoma.

The *Guidance for Application for Authorization* is designed to assist the applicant with development of an application that provides the evidence required to determine whether the applicant has the capacity needed to open a high-quality school. The authorization process includes a written application, document reviews, presentation, and interview and is designed to provide the information and data needed to describe and support:

- A compelling vision and mission;
- An effective academic program for all students;
- A sound financial plan; and
- An effective organizational plan.

Guidance for Application for Authorization

The application guidance is designed to allow the applicant to articulate and provide evidence regarding their ability to establish a high-performing charter or virtual charter school.

- **Intent to Apply:** Applicants seeking to submit an application must first submit a letter of intent to apply for authorization through the SCSB. Upon receipt of the letter of intent, a link to the application and application guidance will be provided.
- **Submission of the Application:** The application must be submitted through the electronic application submission portal at least eighteen (18) but not more than twenty-four (24) months prior to July of the expected school opening year.
- **Presentation:** Following submission, the applicant will present the application at a subsequent SCSB open board meeting.
- **Capacity Interview:** As part of the application review process, the SCSB will schedule and conduct an applicant team interview.
- **Application Evaluation:** The application will be evaluated using the Application Review Summary (see Appendix B). The evaluation will consider all aspects of the application process, including but not limited to the written application, supporting documents, presentation, and capacity interview.

- **Application Determination:** Within ninety (90) days of receipt, the SCSB will consider the application in an open meeting and shall either accept or reject the applicant’s proposal.
 - A written notification of acceptance or rejection of sponsorship by the SCSB will be mailed and/or emailed promptly.
 - If the application is accepted, execution of the charter contract will begin.
 - If the application is rejected, written notification of denial will outline reasons for the decision.
 - Applicant may submit a revised application for consideration by the SCSB within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the notification of rejection.
 - The SCSB shall accept or reject the revised application within thirty (30) days of receipt.
 - If the SCSB denies the revised application, the applicant may proceed in accordance with the Oklahoma Charter School Act.

Application Requirements

In accordance with 70 O. S. § 3-134 and Title 777:10-3-1 of the Administrative Rules, an entity wishing to submit an application to establish a charter school or virtual charter school must complete training provided by the SCSB on the process and requirements for establishing a charter school. The training must be attended by an individual(s) directly associated with the proposed school and attended within the past two (2) years.

The application review process, inclusive of the written application, supporting documents, presentation, and interview is designed to discover evidence that can support the applicant’s ability to:

- Implement the proposed school’s vision and mission;
- Provide an effective academic program for all students;
- Ensure financial performance and the school’s long-term financial stability and adherence with applicable accounting methods; and
- Ensure organizational performance, including strong governance and leadership and compliance with all applicable federal, state, tribal, and local statutes and regulations.

To address these areas, the written application and supporting documents are divided into four sections:

1. Application Information;
2. Academic Program;
3. Financial Capacity; and
4. Organizational Capacity.

An Application Checklist (see Appendix A) has been provided to assist with completion of the application.

1. Application Information

Applicant Information Form:

Name of Proposed School	
Name of Applicant	
Type of Charter School (select all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A new school applicant <input type="checkbox"/> A new school applicant denied sponsorship by the local school district <input type="checkbox"/> A new applicant with a school in operation in Oklahoma wishing to replicate <input type="checkbox"/> A new applicant with a school in operation in another state wishing to replicate <input type="checkbox"/> A brick-and-mortar school <input type="checkbox"/> A virtual school <input type="checkbox"/> A hybrid school 	
Name of Application Contact and Title	
Contact Address	
Contact Email Address	
Contact Phone Number	
Name and Affiliation of Individual(s) Completing Charter School Training	
Grade Levels to be Served	
Proposed Minimum and Maximum Enrollment for Each Year of the Five-Year Charter Contract Term	
Date Application Approved by the Proposed School's Governing Board	

Cover Letter:

Provide a two (2) or three- (3) page cover letter that includes an overview of the proposed school and the community it would serve.

Vision and Mission:

Vision and mission are the cornerstones of a charter school or virtual charter school seeking to fill an educational need within Oklahoma. The development of program design and performance metrics create the roadmap toward fulfillment of the vision and mission.

- Describe the proposed charter school’s vision and mission.
- Describe the criteria that the proposed school will use to measure its effectiveness in meeting its vision and mission.
- Describe how the school’s vision and mission will be realized in the school’s culture.
- Describe how the school’s leadership team, including board members, will ensure that the school’s vision and mission are central components of school academic, financial, and organizational decisions.

Applicant Document Submission

Submit the following document:

- Completed Charter School Training Documentation

2. Academic Program

Charter schools and virtual charter schools authorized by the SCSB should have the capacity to provide all students with an appropriate educational program. This section focuses on the applicant’s proposed academic program and implementation procedures.

Methods of Instruction:

Describe the proposed school’s instructional design including the type of learning environment that will be created, class size and structure, curriculum overview, and teaching methods.

Assessments:

Describe the plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report student progress. Include how the proposed school will use formative and summative assessments to measure program effectiveness.

Special Populations:

Describe the plan for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, students who are academically behind, and students who are gifted and/or talented.

Grade Level Determination:

Describe the policies that will determine the requirements for student grade placement, promotion, and retention.

Graduation Requirements:

For high schools, provide graduation requirements and highlight any expectations that will go above or beyond the state requirements.

Extracurricular Activities:

Describe the plan for offering co-curricular and extracurricular programs and how the offered programs will be funded and delivered.

Applicant Document Submission

Submit the following document:

- Curriculum guides for each core academic area and aligned with the Oklahoma Academic Standards; in the absence of curriculum guides, submit a narrative detailing the curriculum development process and timeline to achieve this goal prior to the school opening.

3. Financial Capacity

Financial stability is a critical component in the operation of a quality charter school. This section describes the proposed school's financial plan.

Financial Decision-making:

Provide a narrative describing how financial decisions will be made which support the school's vision and mission and the academic program.

Financial Plan:

Provide a financial plan for the first five (5) years of operation and a description of the treasurer, encumbrance clerk, and other financial officers or persons who have primary responsibility for the finances of the proposed school. Include a description of financial controls and audit requirements.

Fundraising Contributions:

Provide evidence of anticipated fundraising contributions, if applicable.

Start-up Funding:

Describe any plans to acquire start-up funding through agreements, donations, loans, and/or long-term debt.

Insurance:

Provide a description of the insurance coverage the proposed school will obtain.

Financial Document Submissions:

Submit the following documents:

- Start-up and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions;
- Start-up and first-year cash-flow projections with clearly stated assumptions;
- Any proposed contract between the proposed school's governing board and an educational management organization; and

- Verifiable proof of secured funds for each source of revenue and documentation to support any agreement, donation, loan, or long-term debt that supports the budget.

4. Organizational Capacity

An effective organizational plan ensuring efficient operation of the proposed school is a critical component of school quality. This section describes the organizational capacity of the proposed school.

Governance:

The charter contract is between the proposed charter school's governing board and the SCSB. Governing boards are ultimately responsible for all aspects of the charter contract, school success, and timely intervention upon identifying signs of distress. Strong, independent governing boards support school leaders by providing the resources necessary to meet the needs of students. Provide a narrative describing the proposed school's governing board's capacity to achieve this expectation.

Services:

Describe the proposed school's plans for providing transportation, food service, and all other significant operational or ancillary services.

Employment:

Describe the leadership and teacher employment and hiring policies expected for the proposed school.

Partnerships:

Describe any partnerships or contractual partnerships the proposed school plans to enter.

Facilities:

Describe the proposed school's facilities plan including backup or contingency plans if appropriate.

Student Recruitment:

Describe the plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment including lottery procedures.

Parent Involvement:

Provide a description of parent expectations and the plan for parental involvement.

Organizational Document Submissions:

Submit the following documents:

- A detailed school start-up plan that identifies tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals;

- An organization chart that clearly presents the organizational structure of the proposed school including lines of authority and any external organizations expected to play a role in managing the proposed school and including a description of the roles and responsibilities of each entity;
- Roster of governing board members and contact information;
- Evidence of each board member's residency;
- Proposed governing board meeting calendar;
- Proposed governing board by-laws;
- Signed and notarized Statement of Assurance from each governing board member demonstrating agreement to fully comply as an Oklahoma public charter school or virtual charter school with all statutes, regulations, and requirements of the United States of America, State of Oklahoma, Statewide Charter School Board, and Department of Education; citing agreement to abide by the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and the Oklahoma Open Records Act; guaranteeing access to education and equity for all eligible students regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic status, academic ability or other factors as established by law; acknowledging the performance criteria designed to measure the effectiveness of the proposed school; guaranteeing to meet no fewer than ten (10) months of the year in the state; and guaranteeing to establish the components necessary to begin school operations in the State of Oklahoma on July 1 of the first year, including a public administration facility, state-approved school financial system, state-approved student information system, and secured applicable connections to state reporting systems;
- Proposed Educational Management Organization Contract, if applicable;
- Proposed school calendar;
- Sample daily schedule including bell schedule, class size, instructional staff to student ratio, subjects (and average time on task), recess/free time, and meals and for high schools including access to advanced placement, dual enrollment, and career and technical education; and
- Proposed discipline policy, including special education students.

Appendix A – Application Checklist

Application Checklist		
Completed	Item Name	Instructions
1. Applicant Information		
	Applicant Information Form	Complete the applicant information form ensuring required information included and accurate.
	Cover Letter	Write a two- or three-page letter which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An overview of the proposed school; and <input type="checkbox"/> A description of the community the proposed school would serve.
	Vision and Mission Summary	Vision and mission are the cornerstones of a charter school or virtual charter school seeking to fill an educational need within Oklahoma. The development of program design and performance metrics create the roadmap toward fulfillment of the vision and mission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Articulate the proposed charter school’s vision and mission; <input type="checkbox"/> Describe how the proposed school will implement its vision and mission; <input type="checkbox"/> Describe how the proposed school’s vision and mission will be realized in its culture, including how students will experience the mission; and <input type="checkbox"/> Describe how the proposed school’s leadership team, including board members, will ensure that the school’s vision and mission are central components of academic, financial, and organizational decisions.
	Document Submission	Submit documentation demonstrating the applicant completed required charter school training, including the attendance of a person(s) directly associated with the proposed school and attending training within the past two (2) years.
2. Academic Program		
	Methods of Instruction	Describe the proposed school’s instructional design of the charter school or virtual charter school including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Type of learning environment; <input type="checkbox"/> Class size and structure; <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum overview; and <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching methods.
	Assessments	Describe the proposed school’s plan for implementing student assessments to measure and report student progress on the performance framework including:

Application Checklist		
Completed	Item Name	Instructions
		<input type="checkbox"/> Oklahoma School Testing Program assessments; and <input type="checkbox"/> Other internal and external assessments.
	Special Populations	Describe the plan for identifying and successfully serving the following student populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Students with disabilities; <input type="checkbox"/> Students who are English language learners; <input type="checkbox"/> Students who are academically behind; and <input type="checkbox"/> Students who are gifted and/or talented.
	Grade Level Determination	Describe the policies the proposed school will use to determine the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student grade placement; <input type="checkbox"/> Student promotion; and <input type="checkbox"/> Student retention.
	Graduation Requirements	Describe the proposed school's high school graduation requirements.
	Extracurricular Activities	Describe the proposed school's plan for offering cocurricular and extracurricular programs, including how programs will be funded and delivered.
	Document Submission	Submit one of the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum guides for each core academic area and aligned with the Oklahoma Academic Standards; or <input type="checkbox"/> In the absence of curriculum guides, submit a narrative detailing the curriculum development process and timeline to achieve this goal prior to the school opening.
3. Financial Capacity		
	Financial Decision-making	Provide a narrative describing how financial decisions will be made which support the school's vision and mission and the academic program.
	Financial Plan	Provide a financial plan for the first five (5) years of operation and a description of the treasurer, encumbrance clerk and other financial officers or persons who have primary responsibility for the finances of the proposed school. Include a description of financial controls and audit requirements.
	Fundraising Contributions	Provide evidence of anticipated fundraising contributions if applicable.

Application Checklist		
Completed	Item Name	Instructions
	Start-up funding	Describe any plans to acquire start-up funding through agreements, donations, loans, and/or long-term debt.
	Insurance	Provide a description of the insurance coverage the proposed school will obtain.
	Document Submissions	Submit the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Start-up and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions <input type="checkbox"/> Start-up and first-year cash-flow projections with clearly stated assumptions <input type="checkbox"/> Any proposed contract between the proposed school's governing board and an educational management organization <input type="checkbox"/> Verifiable proof of secured funds for each source of revenue and documentation to support any agreement, donation, loan, or long-term debt that supports the budget
4. Organizational Capacity		
	Governance	The charter contract is between the proposed charter school's governing board and the SCSB. Governing boards are ultimately responsible for all aspects of the charter contract, school success, and timely intervention upon identifying signs of distress. Strong, independent governing boards support school leaders by providing the resources necessary to meet the needs of students. Provide a narrative describing the proposed school's governing board's capacity to achieve this expectation.
	Services	Describe the proposed school's plans for providing the following services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation; <input type="checkbox"/> Food service; and <input type="checkbox"/> Other significant operational or ancillary services.
	Employment	Describe the leadership and teacher employment and hiring policies expected for the proposed school.
	Partnerships	Describe any partnerships or contractual partnerships the proposed school plans to enter.
	Facilities	Describe the proposed school's facilities plan including backup or contingency plans, if appropriate.
	Student Recruitment	Describe the plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures.

Application Checklist		
Completed	Item Name	Instructions
	Parent Involvement	Provide a description of parent expectations and the plan for parental involvement.
	Document Submissions	<p>Submit the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A detailed school start-up plan that identifies tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals; <input type="checkbox"/> An organization chart that clearly presents the organizational structure of the proposed school including lines of authority and any external organizations expected to play a role in managing the proposed school and including a description of the roles and responsibilities of each entity; <input type="checkbox"/> Roster of governing board members and contact information; <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of each board member’s Oklahoma residency; <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed governing board meeting calendar; <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed governing board by-laws; <input type="checkbox"/> Signed and notarized Statement of Assurance from each governing board member demonstrating agreement to fully comply as an Oklahoma public charter school or virtual charter school with all statutes, regulations, and requirements of the United States of America, State of Oklahoma, Statewide Charter School Board, and Department of Education; citing agreement to abide by the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and the Oklahoma Open Records Act; guaranteeing access to education and equity for all eligible students regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic status, academic ability or other factors as established by law; acknowledging the performance criteria designed to measure the effectiveness of the proposed school; guaranteeing to meet no fewer than ten (10) months of the year in the state; and guaranteeing to establish the components necessary to begin school operations in the State of Oklahoma on July 1 of the first year, including a public facility, state-approved school financial

Application Checklist		
Completed	Item Name	Instructions
		<p>system, state-approved student information system, and secured applicable connections to state reporting systems;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed Educational Management Organization Contract (if applicable); <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed school calendar; <input type="checkbox"/> Sample daily schedule including bell schedule, class size, instructional staff to student ratio, subjects (and average time on task), recess/free time, and meals and for high schools including access to advanced placement, dual enrollment, and career and technical education; and <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed discipline policy including special education students.

Appendix B –Application Review Summary

Criteria Standard	Comments and Evidence Examples
1. Applicant Information	
The applicant provided required application information.	
The applicant submitted a cover letter which included an overview of the proposed school and the community it would serve.	
The applicant provided evidence that the proposed school has a compelling vision and mission.	
The applicant submitted documentation of charter school training requirements.	
Criteria Standard	Comments and Evidence Examples
2. Academic Program	
The applicant provided a full description of instruction that describes all required components including type of learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum overview, and teaching methods.	
The applicant provided a full description of the plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report student progress, including information specific to the use of formative and summative assessments to measure program effectiveness was provided.	
The applicant provided the plan for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, students who are academically behind, and students who are gifted and/or talented.	
The applicant provided a detailed description of the policies the school will use to determine	

grade placement, promotion, and retention.	
The applicant has provided a description of the school's graduation requirements, aligning with the school's mission and Oklahoma requirements.	
The applicant provided a plan for offering co-curricular and extracurricular activities including how the programs will be funded and delivered.	
The applicant submitted curriculum guides for core content areas aligned to the Oklahoma Academic Standards or submitted a narrative detailing the curriculum development process and timeline to achieve this goal prior to the school opening.	
Criteria Standard	Comments and Evidence Examples
3. Financial Capacity	
The applicant provided a narrative describing how financial decisions will be made which support the school's vision and mission and the academic program.	
The applicant provided a detailed financial plan for the first five (5) years of operation and a description of the treasurer, encumbrance clerk and other financial officers or persons who have primary responsibility for the finances of the proposed school. The plan included a description of financial controls and audit requirements.	
The applicant provided evidence of anticipated fundraising contributions, if applicable.	
The applicant provided a detailed description of the plan(s) to	

acquire start-up funding through agreements, donations, loans, and/or long-term debt.	
The applicant provided an appropriate description of the insurance coverage the proposed school will obtain.	
The applicant submitted detailed start-up and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions.	
The applicant submitted detailed start-up and first-year cash-flow projections with clearly stated assumptions.	
The applicant submitted proposed contract(s) between the proposed school’s governing board and an educational management organization.	
The applicant submitted verifiable proof of secured funds for each source of revenue and documentation to support any agreement, donation, loan, or long-term debt that supports the budget.	
Criteria Standard	Comments and Evidence Examples
4. Organizational Capacity	
The applicant provided a narrative describing the governing board’s capacity to be responsible for all aspects of the charter contract, school success, timely intervention upon identifying signs of distress, and support for school leaders by providing the resources necessary to meet the needs of students.	
The applicant provided a description of the proposed school’s plans for providing transportation, food service, and all other significant operations or ancillary services.	
The applicant provided a description of leadership and	

teacher employment and hiring policies expected for the proposed school.	
The applicant provided a description of partnerships or contractual partnerships the proposed school plans to enter.	
The applicant provided a description of the proposed school's facilities plan including backup or contingency plans if appropriate.	
The applicant provided the plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures.	
The applicant provided a description of parent expectations and the plan for parental involvement.	
The applicant submitted a detailed school start-up plan that identified tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.	
The applicant submitted an organizational chart that clearly presents the organizational structure of the proposed school including lines of authority and any external organizations expected to play a role in managing the proposed school and including a description of the roles and responsibilities of each entity.	
The applicant submitted a roster of governing board members and contact information.	
The application submitted evidence of each board member's residency.	
The applicant submitted a board meeting calendar that includes ten (10) meetings per calendar year.	

<p>The applicant submitted proposed governing board by-laws.</p>	
<p>The applicant submitted signed and notarized Statements of Assurance from each governing board members demonstrating agreement to fully comply as an Oklahoma public charter school or virtual charter school with all statutes, regulations, and requirements of the United States of American, State of Oklahoma, Statewide Charter School Board, and Department of Education; citing agreement to abide by the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and the Oklahoma Open Records Act; guaranteeing access to education and equity for all eligible students regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic status, academic ability or other factors as established by law; acknowledging the performance criteria designed to measure the effectiveness of the proposed school; guaranteeing to meet no fewer than ten (10) months of the year in the state; and guaranteeing to establish to components necessary to begin school operations in the State of Oklahoma on July 1 of the first year, including a public administration facility, state-approved school financial system, state-approved student information system, and secured applicable connections to state reporting systems.</p>	
<p>The applicant submitted the proposed Educational Management Organization Contract if applicable.</p>	
<p>The applicant submitted a school calendar that meets the</p>	

attendance requirements of the State of Oklahoma.	
The applicant submitted a sample daily schedule including bell schedule, class size, instructional staff to student ratio, subjects (and average time on task), recess/free time, and meals. For high schools, the schedule included access to advanced placement, dual enrollment, and career and technical education.	
The applicant submitted a proposed discipline policy including special education students.	