

Charter School Bidders' Conference



August 2024

Connecticut State Department of Education

Connecticut State Department of Education Team



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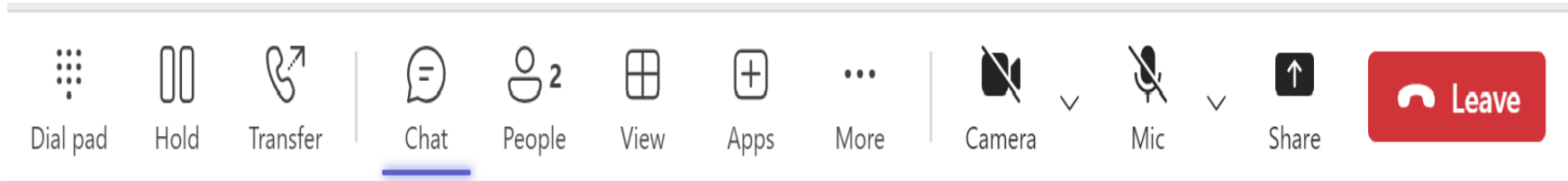
Shakira Jacobs-Vazquez, Education Services Specialist

GOALS

- Understanding the CT Landscape of Charter Schools
- Navigating the New State/Local Charter School RFP Application and Process
- Understanding Next Steps after Application Submission

Teams Tips

To ask a question,  open the chat window, type your question to the panelists, then click send.



We will respond to your questions through a written frequently asked questions document at a later time.

As an attendee you can also “like” or comment on other attendee’s questions. This will help to identify popular questions. Click the thumbs up icon to “like” a comment.

Click the red thumbs up icon to “unlike” the comment.

Note: “Select Send Anonymously” if you do not want your name attached to your question in the Q&A.

Connecticut Charter Schools Statewide

Amistad Academy New Haven, CT	Edmonds Cofield Preparatory Academy for Young Men New Haven, CT	New Beginnings Family Academy Bridgeport, CT
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Bridgeport, CT	Elm City Montessori School¹ New Haven, CT	Odyssey Community Manchester, CT
Achievement First Elm City College Preparatory School New Haven, CT	Explorations Charter School Winsted, CT	Park City Prep Charter School Bridgeport, CT
Achievement First Hartford Academy Hartford, CT	Great Oaks Charter School Bridgeport, CT	Side By Side Charter School Norwalk, CT
Booker T. Washington Academy New Haven, CT	Highville Charter School New Haven, CT	Stamford Charter School for Excellence Stamford, CT
Brass City Charter School Waterbury, CT	Integrated Day Charter School Norwich, CT	The Bridge Academy Bridgeport, CT
Capital Preparatory Harbor Charter School Bridgeport, CT	Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication New London, CT	
Common Ground High School New Haven, CT	Jumoke Academy Hartford, CT	

¹Local charter school

Location Criteria

Charter schools must be located in the following authorized districts.

Ansonia	Bloomfield
Bridgeport	Bristol
Danbury	Derby
East Hartford	East Haven
East Windsor	Hamden
Hartford	Killingly
Manchester	Meriden
Middletown	Naugatuck
New Britain	New Haven
New London	Norwalk
Norwich	Putnam
Stamford	Vernon
Waterbury	West Haven
Winchester	Windham
Windsor	Windsor Locks

What Is A Charter School

CHARTER SCHOOLS DEFINED

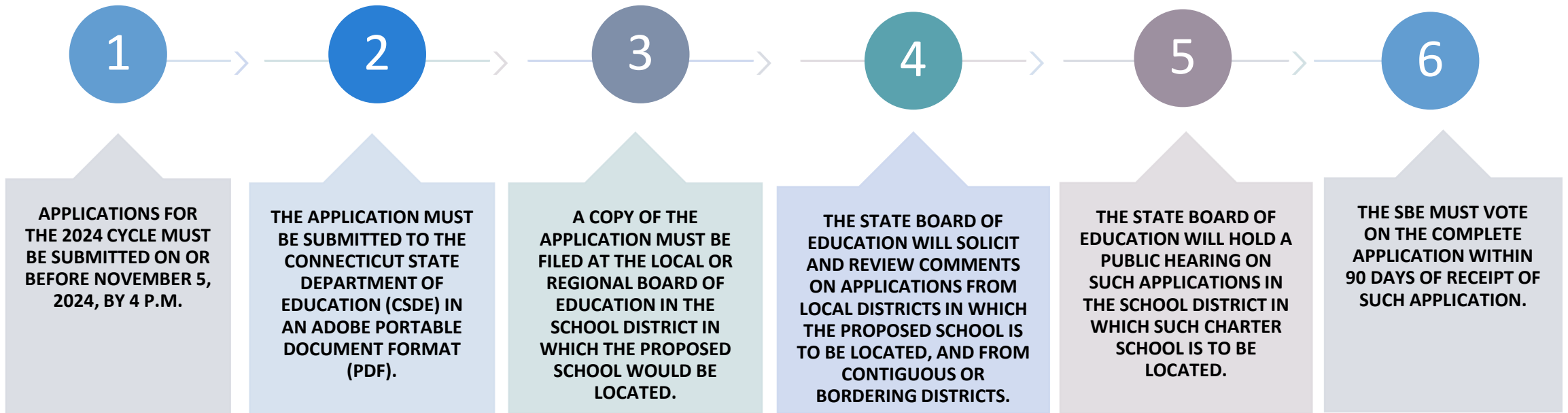
A charter school, as defined by § 10-66aa of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), is a public, nonsectarian school that is established under a charter granted.

A state charter school is a new public school approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).

A local charter school is a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved by the local or regional board of education of the school district in which it is located and by the SBE.

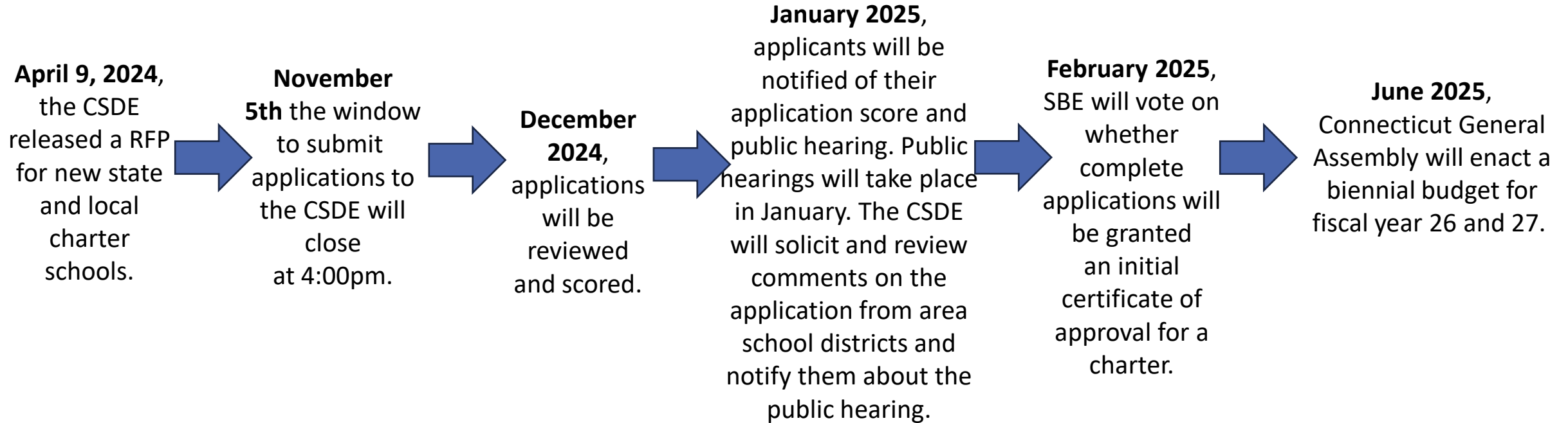
A charter management organization is any not-for-profit organization that contracts with a charter school for educational design, implementation, or whole school management services, which include the financial, business, operational, and administrative functions for a school.

State Charter School Application Process



Applications will be opened for review after November 5, 2024

State Charter Application 2024-25 Timeline



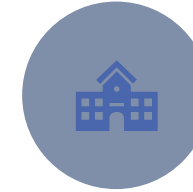
Local Charter School Applications



Applications for the 2024 cycle must be submitted on or before November 5, 2024, by 4 p.m.



The application must be submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF).



A copy of the application must be filed at the local or regional board of education in the school district in which the local charter is to be located.



The local board of education (LBE) must review and evaluate the application and hold a public hearing in the school district on such application.



The local board must survey teachers and parents in the school district to determine if there is sufficient interest in opening the local charter school.



The local board must vote on the complete application within 75 days of receipt of such application.

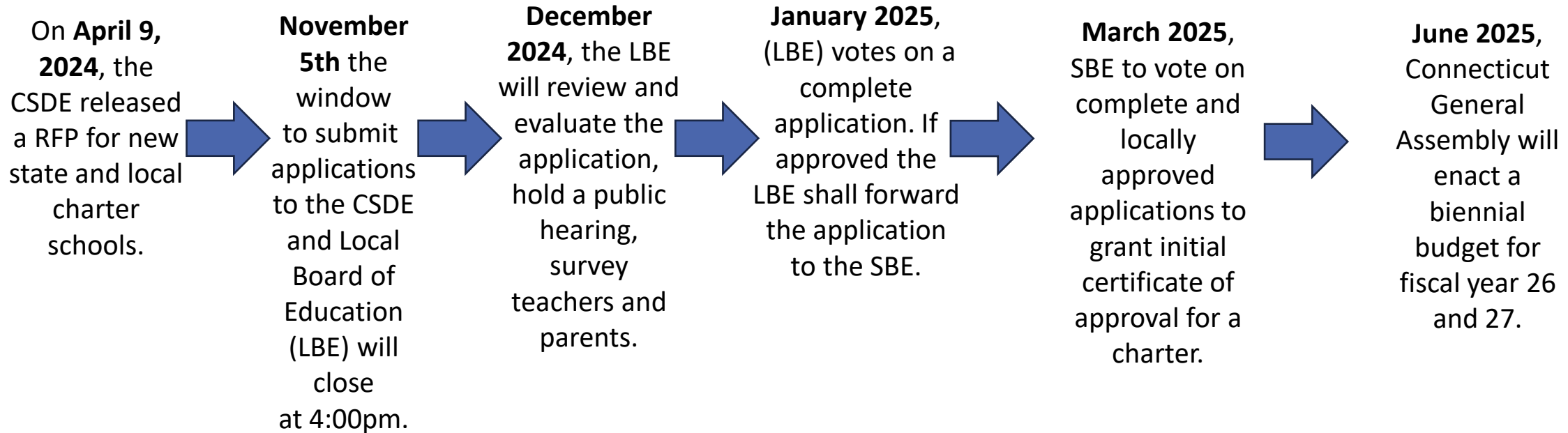


If approved, the local board shall forward the application to the SBE immediately upon passage.



The SBE must vote on the complete and locally approved application within 60 days of receipt of such application.

Local Charter Application 2024-25 Timeline



Deemed a Charter

If the SBE grants an initial certificate of approval for a charter, the SBE must submit the following materials to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education and appropriations and the budgets of state agencies: (1) a copy of the initial certificate of approval; and (2) a summary of comments made at the public hearing held as part of the charter application process. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(a)(2), if the General Assembly appropriates sufficient funding for the school, an initial certificate of approval for a charter school shall be effective and deemed a charter as of July first of the first fiscal year for which such funds are appropriated.

Preferences, Considerations, and Scoring Criteria

Preferences and Considerations

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c) the SBE will give preference to certain factors when considering applications for charter schools.

- Serving high-need student populations and demonstrating the ability to attract, enroll, and retain students from among these populations.
- Improving the academic performance of an existing school that has consistently demonstrated substandard academic performance.
- Serving students who reside in a priority school district.
- Serving students who reside in a district in which seventy-five percent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities.
- The applicant is a higher education institution or locating at an existing worksite.

Application Review Standards

Complete applications will be scored using the following standards:

- **Does Not Meet:** The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issues in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.
- **Partially Meets:** The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information in order to be considered reasonably comprehensive and demonstrate a clear vision of how the school will operate.
- **Meets:** The response indicates solid preparation and grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a reasonable and comprehensive response. It addresses the review criteria with information showing preparation and a clear, realistic picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to execute the vision described in the response.
- **Exceeds:** The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. The response indicates thorough preparation, expertise, and a clear and compelling picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described in the response.

I. School Vision and Design

1. Mission, Purpose, and Specialized Focus Maximum Score 15

- Define the core purpose and key values of the school, including the school model, grades, and total number of students it is estimated to serve.
- Present the vision of the school and its specialized focus. Indicate a specialized focus and ways in which the school will positively impact its stakeholders and community.
- The vision should align with the mission and represent how the school will operate.

2. Educational Philosophy Maximum Score 9

- Demonstrate how the philosophy will serve the diverse needs of individual students.
- Explain how the proposed philosophy of the school will lead to student academic achievement.

3. Curriculum Maximum Score 18

- The curriculum must align with the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for English language arts, mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science, and for all other areas of study.

School Vision and Design (continued)

4. Instruction

Maximum Score 15

- Describe the instructional methods or techniques that will be used to facilitate high-quality teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate how instructional methods support high standards and are accessible and appropriate for all students.
- Describe how the school will determine and provide for the professional development needs of the staff.

5. Student Assessment

Maximum Score 15

- Show a clear alignment of assessments to the curriculum and the state standards.
- Demonstrate how the assessment system ensures the participation of all students on both the state mandated testing and other alternative assessments.
- Describe how proposed school will train and support educators to employ formative assessment practices in their classrooms.

II. Strength of Organizational Effort

1. Experience and Expertise of Founders

Maximum Score 9

- Demonstrate clear expertise and relevant experiences and/or qualifications of the founders.

2. School Governance and Management

THIS SECTION IS REQUIRED BUT NOT SUBJECT TO SCORING

- Provide a viable governance structure and organizational chart showing proper oversight of various functions of the school.
- Describe how the governing council will exercise its responsibility to oversee the operation of the school including, but not limited to, educational programs, governance and fiscal management, personnel, facility maintenance, and community outreach. Indicate how the governing council will hold the school accountable to stakeholders.
- Define the roles, responsibilities, and interaction between council membership, committees, and school administration.

Strength of Organizational Effort (continued)

Strength of Organizational Effort (continued)

3. School Leader

Yes = 1 point | No = 0

Maximum Score 2

For applicants with an identified school leader: Provide the name, qualifications, experiences, certifications, and education of the proposed lead administrator; offer evidence to demonstrate whether the individual has a record of leading a high-quality school.

- ***For applicants without an identified school leader:*** Presents a plan for recruiting and hiring a proven school leader and clearly articulate the characteristics and skills that the proposed school will evaluate in selecting a leader.

4. Evidence of Support

Yes = 1 point | No = 0

Maximum Score 1

- Provide evidence that the proposed school is welcomed by the local community.

III. Student Composition, Services, and Policies

1. School Demographics

Maximum Score 9

- Describe the needs and demographics of the community and student population to be served by the proposed school.
- Provide a viable enrollment plan, including a clear rationale for grades served, enrollment, and growth.
- Describe procedures for encouraging involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making.

2. Special Education

Maximum Score 12

- Provide a comprehensive plan for educating students with disabilities.
- Articulate a clear system to monitor student data and student's eligibility for Section 504 services.
- Present a plan to engage the parents of students with disabilities.

3. English Learners (EL)/Multilingual Learners (ML)

Maximum Score 15

- Provide a plan to identify and meet the learning needs of all EL/ ML students (e.g., screenings, assessments, exit criteria).
- Describe how the school will involve the parents of EL/ML students in the school, including through translation services.

Student Composition, Services, and Policies (continued)

4. Admission Policy and Criteria

Maximum Score 9

- Provide a clear and coherent admissions policy including student admission criteria and procedures and plan that complies with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(d)(8).
- Develop a viable plan to attract students and families, from a diverse student body and avoid discrimination.
- Show a commitment to reduce racial, ethnic, and/or economic isolation.

5. Student Discipline Policies

Maximum Score 12

- Provide a clear behavior management system that encourages positive behaviors and applies consistent sanctions and interventions in response to infractions.
- Provide due process safeguards for all students, including those with disabilities.

6. Human Resources Policies

Maximum Score 18

- Define competencies and professional standards necessary for hiring teachers, administrators, and all other school staff.
- Provide a clear behavior management system that encourages positive behaviors and applies consistent sanctions and interventions in response to infractions.
- Describe plans to attract, retain and develop high-quality teachers and school leaders and comply with teacher certification.

IV. School Viability

1. Building Options

Maximum Score 6

- Provide a plan for identifying and acquiring a suitable facility to support the proposed school.

2. Financial Plan

Yes = 1 point | No = 0

Maximum Score 6

- Provide a thorough budget that reflects all commitments outlined in the application through the proposed school's fifth year of operation and shows viable financial planning and the fiscal viability of the school.
- Present a financial management system and processes aligned to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) with adequate internal controls, including a description of the fiscal staff positions, qualifications, and duties.

3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability

Maximum Score 12

- Provide clear system of accountability for all stakeholders.
- Identify robust data systems and processes to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness.

4. Timetable

Yes = 1 point | No = 0

Maximum Score 2

- Provide clear systems of accountability for all stakeholders.
- Identify robust data systems and processes to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness.

Application Review and Expectations

- Each applicant must produce a complete charter application that addresses **all** elements required by law in order to be reviewed by the screening committee.
- Any incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant and eliminated from the review process.
- Complete applications will be evaluated by a team of trained representatives with educational expertise and knowledge of charter school operations, curriculum and finance.
- Applications will be scored by reviewers using **Application Review Standards**, as described on page 13 of the application, against the criteria detailed in Appendix **G: Application Rubric** beginning on page 64 of the application.
- Reviewers will apply the four **Application Review Standards** to score each section of the **Application Rubric** on a scale of “0 – Does Not Meet” to “3 – Exceeds”, to rate how well applicant’s responses address the questions listed in each section of the application.
- The applicant’s proposal for a charter school must present a powerful vision as well as functional details that provide a blueprint for the school’s operation. Overall, the application should demonstrate that the applicant can open and operate a high-quality public school in Connecticut.

Fiscal Considerations

Applicant is required to provide:

A cash-flow projection statement for the first year of operation to show movement of funds, must include a plan for cash-flow shortfalls.

Pursuant to the law state charter schools received a per-pupil base grant of \$11,525 for each student enrolled in the school per approved enrollment and additional support provided depending on student eligibility for free or reduced-priced meals and students identified as Multilingual learners/English learners MLs/ELs.

If approved, the CSDE is required to:

The SBE may approve, within available appropriations, a per-student grant not to exceed \$3,000 for each student enrolled in a local charter school. Local charters may receive grants of up to \$500,000 to assist in start-up costs.

Payments shall be paid as follows:
Twenty-five per cent of the amount not later than July fifteenth and September first based on estimated student enrollment, and twenty-five percent of the amount not later than January first and the remaining amount not later than April first, each based on actual student enrollment on October first.

State Agency Contacts for Charter School Technical Assistance

Topic	Contact Person	Email Address
Academic/Curriculum	Irene Parisi	irene.parisi@ct.gov
Chief Turnaround Officer	Melissa Jenkins	melissa.jenkins@ct.gov
Charter School Waivers	Robert Kelly	robert.kelly@ct.gov
Child Nutrition	Therese Dandeneau	teri.dandeneau@ct.gov
Collective Bargaining	Laura Anastasio	laura.anastasio@ct.gov
English Learners/Multilingual Learners (EL/ML)	Megan Alubicki Flick	megan.alubicki@ct.gov
Establishing a Nonprofit	Office of the Secretary of State	860-509-6000
Parent Engagement	Judith Carson	judy.carson@ct.gov
Per-pupil Expenditures	Kevin Chambers	kevin.chambers@ct.gov
Pupil Transportation, Discipline	Mike McKeon	mike.mckeon@ct.gov
School Governance and Management	Robert Kelly	robert.kelly@ct.gov
School Health	Chlo-Anne Bobrowski	chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov
Special Education	Bryan Klimkiewicz	bryan.klimkiewicz@ct.gov
Student Admissions	Robert Kelly	robert.kelly@ct.gov
State Assessment	Abe Krisst	abe.krisst@ct.gov
Teacher Certification	Sharon Fuller	sharon.fuller@ct.gov



THANK YOU

Connecticut State Department of Education