



# 2022-23 Charter School Facilities Fund

## High-Quality Expansion Competitive Grant Application

### Background

In 2017, the Tennessee legislature established a public charter school facilities program, pursuant to which State funds are allocated annually to charter schools to assist them with acquiring and improving their facilities. After budgetary cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in no charter school facilities funds for FY21, the legislature approved a one-time allocation of \$24 million for FY22 and \$6 million in recurring funds for future years. \$6 million of the FY22 funds will be allocated to schools based on their student enrollment. The remaining funds will be awarded to schools through this competitive grant process.

### Grant Information

Awarded funds may be used for the purchase or lease of property, general capital improvements to existing and available buildings, and the repayment of debt incurred for existing capital outlay projects. These funds will be made available on an *equitable basis for the benefit of public charter schools of all sizes, characteristics, geographic locations, and authorizers*.

Grantees may be awarded up to \$700,000 in facilities funds. Awards will be based on the number of applications, specific needs identified by applicants, total funds available and competitive score. It is anticipated that \$5 million will be allocated for the expansion of high-quality schools and \$21 million will be allocated for need-based charter school grants.

### Competitive Grant Types

There are two types of competitive grants. A charter school may only apply for one competitive grant.

- (1) High-Quality Charter Expansion Grants: Eligible applicants include either: (a) the sponsor of a new charter school that has been approved by an LEA or the Commission but is not yet open; or (b) the operator of an existing charter school that has received its authorizer's approval to expand enrollment or grade levels beyond that set forth in the original charter agreement. The applicant must provide a clear record of driving student achievement and outcomes.
- (2) Need-Based Facility Grants: These grants will be awarded to charter schools with demonstrable unmet facility needs impacting the student learning environment. Charter schools that are currently open and providing instruction to students are eligible to apply.

### Accountability Requirements

All awards will be reimbursement-based. Awarded applicants will be required to submit proof of work performed by a contractor or architect licensed in Tennessee, or proof of a facilities lease or purchase. The grantee must submit all verification documentation through the department's ePlan system. The department reserves the right to request any additional documentation deemed necessary to verify the use of funds.



### Use of Funds

1. Funds may be used for the purpose of purchasing:
  - (a) real property upon which to build school facilities,
  - (b) permanent school facilities, or
  - (c) re-locatable school facilities (i.e., portables).
2. Funds may be used for any costs associated with the purchase of underutilized or vacant property available pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-136.
3. Funds may be used for lease or mortgage payments.
4. Funds may be used for the service of debt incurred for existing capital outlay projects.
5. Funds may be used for the reimbursement of renovations and future capital outlay projects.

### Capital Outlay Project Requirements

Capital outlay projects must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. The charter school must:
  - a. Own the facility or property upon which it plans to build/modify; or
  - b. Be able to demonstrate it is in the process of purchasing the facility via lease-purchase agreements; or
  - c. Have a long-term lease with at least two years remaining; or
  - d. Have a memorandum of understanding with its authorizer for the use of facilities that allows for the capital projects being proposed.
2. The proposed facilities activity must be:
  - a. Necessary to ensure the health and/or safety of all students; or
  - b. Necessary to ensure an academic environment conducive to learning.

Examples of construction or renovation projects that **WOULD** meet requirements include:

- ✓ HVAC replacement or repair
- ✓ Electrical/plumbing/roof repair or enhancement
- ✓ Security renovations or enhancements
- ✓ Removal of asbestos or other hazardous materials
- ✓ Addition or modification of classroom or multi-purpose learning spaces
- ✓ Addition, renovation, or re-design of spaces dedicated to physical activity
- ✓ Assessment of facilities related to student safety and well-being (e.g., testing of drinking water for lead content, structural soundness of facility, etc.)
- ✓ Costs or fees associated with ensuring code compliance and/or associated inspections including lead in drinking water testing



Examples of construction or renovation projects that **WOULD NOT** meet requirements include:

- × Exterior landscaping
- × Renovations or additions to spaces not utilized for student learning or well-being (e.g., administrative offices)

### **Application Format**

Applicants shall submit the following information to [Charter.Schools@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Schools@tn.gov) using the template provided which includes:

1. Application Cover Page
2. Signed Assurances
3. Project Narrative (Maximum of 8 pages)

Applicants should address Part I and Part II of the project narrative. The project narrative should clearly identify the need for the proposed facility expenditure and how it will drive student outcomes.

4. ePlan Budget and Budget Narrative with Project Timeline (Maximum of 2 pages)

Applicants must complete a budget with their requested allocation using template in *Attachment B*.

5. Appendices

Any relevant supporting documents not already specified but that are germane to the application request should be attached. Examples include construction quotes or proposed architectural fees. Please do not attach curriculum, commercial publications, or videos.

All pages must be standard letter size (8 ½" by 11"). Please utilize Times New Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins. Number all pages and include the charter school's full name in the header of each page. The project narrative, budget narrative, project timeline and appendices should be saved as one pdf document emailed to [Charter.Schools@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Schools@tn.gov). Requests for clarification or additional information on the application should be sent to [Charter.Schools@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Schools@tn.gov). Upon award of a grant the applicant must upload the application into ePlan as part of funding application.

### **Application Submission**

Charter school applicants shall submit completed application template as a single PDF to [Charter.Schools@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Schools@tn.gov). Upon award, application materials must be submitted into the ePlan platform as part of the ePlan funding application. By signing and submitting the application and assurances, the school acknowledges, understands, and agrees to comply with the grant application requirements and assurances and confirms that all the guidelines have been reviewed and understood by all relevant parties.

**Applications must be submitted in full to [Charter.Schools@tn.gov](mailto:Charter.Schools@tn.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m. Central on December 2, 2022.** Any application received after this deadline, that takes exception to any of the stated requirements, or that fails to comply with specified procedures will not be eligible. Applications will be reviewed and scored in accordance with the rubric set forth in *Attachment A* of this document. If selected as a grant recipient, applicants will be notified in January 2023. The department will provide instructions and documentation required of grantees. All reimbursements are subject to approval by the department.



# 2022-23 Charter School Facilities Fund High-Quality Expansion Competitive Grant Application

## Project Narrative (not to exceed 8 pages)

### **Part I: Project Overview**

All applicants must answer the questions below.

1. Describe your current school facility or your proposed facility (if you are an approved charter school that has not commenced instruction). Provide all relevant details, including *but not limited to*:
  - a. How old is your facility?
  - b. How old are its major systems or components, such as roof, HVAC, etc.?
  - c. Has the facility been negatively impacted by any recent weather events?
  - d. How long have you occupied the facility?
  - e. Is the facility owned or leased?
  - f. How many students does the facility currently serve?
  - g. Based on its current composition, what is the facility's maximum student capacity?
  - h. How many rooms does the facility contain, and how many rooms are used exclusively for instructional purposes?
2. Describe the particular facility needs or challenges faced by your school that could be addressed through financial support from the Charter School Facilities Fund. Indicate which of the following categories of expenditures would apply:
  - a. Purchase of property;
  - b. Lease or mortgage payments;
  - c. Service of debt incurred for existing capital outlay projects; and/or
  - d. Future capital improvements or renovations to facilities.
3. Indicate the amount of funding you are requesting, and how you would utilize it to address the previously identified needs or challenges. Note: the maximum amount that may be awarded to any one school is \$700,000. You may describe projects that exceed the maximum, as long as you address how the funding will contribute to the total project expenses.



## **Part II: Grant-Specific Narrative**

High-Quality Charter Expansion Grant: The applicant should describe how the facilities funding will support replication or an increase in the number of high-quality student seats.

1. List your enrollment projections based on capacity added through the use of these funds. Provide evidence that a demand for these additional seats exists in your desired community.
2. Provide evidence of past academic performance that would indicate the additional seats added would be high quality. Applicants must, at a minimum, address state assessment data including TCAP and TVAAS scores, English Learner (EL) assessments, and the ACT (if applicable), for each charter school that the applicant currently operates in Tennessee. How will your model lead to success on TCAP and what evidence supports this?
3. Describe other metrics of success that indicate new seats would be high-quality seats, including but not limited to: ACT, other diagnostic assessments (e.g., MAP, Dibels, STAR, etc.), graduation rates, attendance and chronic absenteeism rates, student retention data, teacher retention data, or any other data aligned to the mission and goals of the school. How will your model lead to other forms of success and what evidence supports this?
4. Explain your organization's operational and financial capacity to support the increased seats created as a result of receiving this grant. Include verifiable revenue, staffing, professional development needs, curricular costs, technology, etc.

**Budget Narrative** (not to exceed 2 pages)**Part III: Budget Narrative and Timeline**

All applicants should describe the following:

- the specific sub-costs associated with the proposed investment,
- the expected timeline for completion,
- identification of any components that might be subject to variance in expected cost or time, and
- contingency plans.



# Attachment A: Scoring Rubric

Applications will be reviewed by three (3) individuals, who will norm on the scoring in advance. The total scores of each of the reviewers will be averaged to determine the applicant’s final score. Applicants must earn a minimum of 75% of possible points (18 points) to be eligible for a grant. Funding will be awarded to the applicants with the highest scores.

APPLICATION COMPONENT	MAXIMUM POINTS	ASSIGNED POINTS
1. Cover Page	Pre-Requisite (no points)	
2. Signed Assurances	Pre-Requisite (no points)	
3. Part I: Project Overview	4	
4. Part II: Grant-Specific Narrative	12	
5. Part III: Budget, Budget Narrative and Timeline	8	
6. Appendices	If applicable (no points)	
<b>SCORE (maximum possible score = 24)</b>		
<b>Evaluator Identification:</b>		



Project Overview: Part I Scoring Rubric				
Project Overview				
<u>0 Points</u>	<u>1 Point</u>	<u>2 Points</u>	<u>3 Points</u>	<u>4 Points</u>
The narrative fails to describe the applicant's current or proposed facility AND fails to describe a facility need.	The narrative describes a facility need but fails to provide the context for the need (i.e., information regarding the current condition of the facility).	The narrative describes a facility need and its context, but the amount requested is unreasonable OR the explanation for how the funds will address the need is unclear or unrealistic.	The narrative describes a need that can be addressed through financial support from the grant, but the amount of requested funding is unsupported.	The narrative describes a clear, compelling need that can be addressed through financial support from the grant; and the amount of requested funding is reasonable and supported by evidence.

Project Narrative: Part II Scoring Rubric – High-Quality Expansion				
Projected Enrollment and Community Demand				
<u>0 Points</u>	<u>1 Point</u>	<u>2 Points</u>	<u>3 Points</u>	<u>4 Points</u>
The narrative fails to provide specific enrollment projections AND a demonstrated demand for additional seats in the community.	The narrative fails to provide specific enrollment projections OR fails to demonstrate demand for additional seats in their community.	The narrative provides enrollment projections, but they are unrealistic, or it is unclear how they will address the community demand.	The narrative provides reasonable enrollment projections for new charter seats that address a community demand.	The narrative provides reasonable enrollment projections for new charter seats that address a documented community demand.





<b>Evidence of Strong Past Performance</b>				
<b><u>0 Points</u></b>	<b><u>1 Point</u></b>	<b><u>2 Points</u></b>	<b><u>3 Points</u></b>	<b><u>4 Points</u></b>
The narrative fails to provide evidence of strong past academic performance or other metrics of success outlined in the application.	The narrative provides some evidence of strong past academic performance or other metrics of success outlined in the application but fails to include state-level performance data.	The narrative provides evidence of strong past academic performance or other metrics of success outlined in the application, but they do not compare favorably with district metrics.	The narrative provides evidence of strong past academic performance, including recent TVAAS scores of a 4 or 5 for math and reading, and other metrics of success outlined in the application that compare favorably with district metrics.	The narrative provides compelling evidence of strong past academic performance, including recent TVAAS scores of a 4 or 5 for math and reading, and success metrics outlined in the application, that compare favorably with district metrics and demonstrate consistently high performance across all subgroups.
<b>Demonstrated Capacity</b>				
<b><u>0 Points</u></b>	<b><u>1 Point</u></b>	<b><u>2 Points</u></b>	<b><u>3 Points</u></b>	<b><u>4 Points</u></b>
The application does not include an operational or financial plan.	The operational and financial plan fail to demonstrate the school's capacity to support additional seats.	The operational and financial plan may demonstrate some capacity, but the plan is incomplete or unrealistic.	The applicant provides a complete and realistic operational and financial plan demonstrating capacity to support the increased seats.	The applicant provides a complete, realistic, and compelling operational and financial plan demonstrating capacity to support the increased seats; and provides an example of past expansion success.



Part III: Project Budget, Budget Narrative and Timeline Scoring Rubric

Application Budget

Table with 5 columns: 0 Points, 1 Point, 2 Points, 3 Points, 4 Points. Describes scoring criteria for budget breakdown.

Budget Timeline and Plan

Table with 5 columns: 0 Points, 1 Point, 2 Points, 3 Points, 4 Points. Describes scoring criteria for budget timeline and plan.



# Attachment B: Account and Line-Item Numbers

Account Number	72620 - Maintenance of Plant	76100 - Regular Capital Outlay	82130 - Principal	82230 - Interest
<b>Line-Item Number</b>				
<b>304 - Architects</b>		Yes		
<b>308 - Consultants</b>		Yes		
<b>321 - Engineering Services</b>		Yes		
<b>330 - Operating Lease Payments</b>	Yes			
<b>331 - Legal Services</b>		Yes		
<b>335 - Maintenance &amp; Repair Services - Building</b>	Yes			
<b>336 - Maintenance &amp; Repair Services - Equipment</b>	Yes			
<b>399 - Other Contracted Services</b>	Yes	Yes		
<b>418 - Equipment &amp; Machinery Parts</b>	Yes			
<b>426 - General Construction Materials</b>	Yes			
<b>499 - Other Supplies and Materials</b>	Yes			
<b>599 - Other Charges</b>	Yes			
<b>601 - Principle on Bonds</b>			Yes	
<b>602 - Principle on Notes</b>			Yes	
<b>603 - Interest on Bonds</b>				Yes
<b>604 - Interest on Notes</b>				Yes
<b>610 - Principle on Capitalized Leases</b>			Yes	
<b>611 - Interest on Capitalized Leases</b>				Yes
<b>612 - Principle on Other Loans Payable</b>			Yes	
<b>613 - Interest on Other Loans Payable</b>				Yes
<b>699 - Other Debt Service</b>				Yes
<b>706 - Building Construction</b>		Yes		
<b>707 - Building Improvements</b>		Yes		
<b>715 - Land</b>		Yes		
<b>717 - Maintenance Equipment</b>	Yes			
<b>724 - Site Development</b>		Yes		
<b>799 - Other Capital Outlay</b>		Yes		