



Charter School Renewal Application

Purpose

T.C.A. § 49-13-121 sets forth the procedures by which a charter school may renew its charter agreement with its authorizer. A charter school must submit a renewal application to its authorizer **no later than April 1 of the year prior to the year in which its charter agreement expires**. Renewal applications should allow authorizers to answer the following questions:

- Has the school met its academic goals?
- Has the school been faithful to its mission and charter design?
- Has the school been effectively governed?
- Is the school fiscally sound?
- Are parents and students satisfied?
- Has the school satisfactorily met its legal obligations?
- If the school's charter is renewed, are its goals for the next charter term likely to be achieved?

In addition to the renewal application, authorizers may review the school's annual reports, interim reviews, performance reports, and audits, including A-133 audits if applicable, when making renewal determinations.

The department of education has developed the following guidelines for use during the charter renewal application process.

Renewal Timeline and Submission Instructions

The renewal application is due by **April 1¹** of the year prior to the year in which the current charter agreement expires.

On or before the following **February 1**, the authorizer shall rule by resolution to approve or deny the renewal application. If the authorizer denies the renewal application, the charter school governing body may appeal to the charter school commission **within ten (10) days of the date of the decision to deny**.

A decision by the charter school commission to deny the renewal of a charter agreement shall be final. No additional appeals may be considered.

¹ Tennessee law provides that when the deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or State observed holiday, the application materials are due on the next business day.



Each charter school seeking renewal shall complete all sections of the renewal application adhering to formatting and maximum page limitations.

A charter school should check with its authorizer to determine if any additional information is required for renewal.

An electronic copy of the completed renewal application must be submitted to the authorizer and the department of education. Electronic submissions may be sent to the department via email at charter.schools@tn.gov.

The renewal application shall include the following:

1. Applicant Information Cover Page (1 page)
2. Signed Assurances (1 page)
3. Application Narrative (20 pages maximum)
4. Appendices – optional (15 pages maximum)

All materials must be received by the authorizer by the close of business on the required deadline.

The renewal application, including the cover page, assurances, narrative, and any appendices may be no more than 37 pages total. The application narrative should be formatted using standard, one-inch margins and a font size of no less than 11 points, and all pages in the application should be sequentially numbered (e.g. 1 of 18). The appendices should be clearly labeled and referenced in the application narrative.



Tennessee Charter School Renewal Application

Applicant Information Cover Page

Charter School Name _____

Charter School Address _____

Charter School Phone _____

Charter Sponsor Name _____

Authorizer _____

Charter School Primary Contact _____

Primary Contact Cell Phone & Email _____

Date Charter Awarded _____

1st year of Operation _____

Date Charter Expires _____

Proposed Grade Levels and Student Enrollment for Next 10-yr Term		
Year following renewal:	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		
Year 5		
Year 6		
Year 7		
Year 8		
Year 9		
Year 10		



Assurances

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for ____[name of school]_____ is true to the best of my knowledge and belief;

And if awarded a charter, the school will:

1. operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of its authorizer and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Charter School Act;
2. follow all federal, state and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111(p);
3. provide special education services for students as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;
5. follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. comply with all provisions of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002, as amended;
7. employ individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
8. comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 et seq.; 10-7-503, 504);
9. not charge tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and T.C.A. § 49-6-3003;
10. follow state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111, 120 and 127;
11. require any member of the governing body, employee, officer or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by T.C.A. § 8-19-101;
12. maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage;
13. obtain all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the school building and on school property;
14. notify its authorizer immediately of any change in circumstances that may have a significant impact on the school's ability to fulfill its goals as stated in the charter; and
15. submit a request to amend its charter if the school plans to make a change to its operations.

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



Application Narrative

Pursuant to TCA § 49-13-121, a public charter school renewal application shall contain a report of the school's operations, including students' standardized test scores, financial statements, and audits of the eight (8) years immediately preceding the date of the renewal application.

The application narrative should not exceed **20 pages** utilizing standard, one-inch margins and a font size of no less than 11 points.

The renewal application narrative is organized into four areas:

1. Academic Success
2. Operational Stability
3. Financial Health
4. Future Plans/Projections

Section I - Academic Success

Note on Impact of COVID-19: During the 2019-20 school year, school closures caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency resulted in the suspension of statewide testing. As a result, charter schools may not have the necessary data to report on the most recent measures of academic performance or growth. A charter school should report academic achievement and growth results from prior school years during its charter agreement term. In addition, the department encourages charter schools to provide any available academic data, including internal school assessments, relating to the period during and after school closures in response to the below questions.

- a. Describe the school's academic achievement and growth results over the course of the current charter term. Include tables, charts, or graphs, as applicable, to illustrate cumulative and/or yearly assessment results.
- b. Address progress toward meeting academic goals outlined in the current charter agreement. Were any amendments made to academic goals? If so, explain.
- c. Outline the school's assessment system and explain how assessments are used to inform instructional practice, evaluate teacher effectiveness, and implement professional development.
- d. Describe how the school uses other data (qualitative and quantitative) to evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program.
- e. Discuss progress made toward closing achievement gaps.
- f. Outline leader and teacher professional development and its impact on student achievement.
- g. Explain how the school supports diverse learners.
- h. Discuss areas of academic concern and changes made to address any deficiencies.



- i. Explain why the school's academic outcomes merit renewal of the charter.

Section II – Operational Stability

- a. Address progress toward meeting operational goals outlined in the charter agreement, if applicable.
- b. Discuss student enrollment over the course of the current charter term. Is the school operating at maximum capacity? How many students are currently on the wait list?
- c. Describe trends in student attrition rates and how leaders have addressed any concerns in attrition.
- d. Explain how the school provides a safe environment and addresses the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of students.
- e. Explain how the school has made community connections and developed working relationships with parents and families.
- f. Explain how the school sustains a well-functioning organizational structure and provides for personnel stability and effective teacher retention.
- g. Describe the development of the board members and school leadership during the current charter term.
- h. Describe any facility changes/improvements and their impact on achieving school goals.
- i. Explain why the school's operational condition merits renewal of the charter.

Section III - Financial Health

- a. Address progress toward meeting financial goals outlined in the charter agreement, if applicable.
- b. Report on the fiscal management of the school during the current charter term based on previously submitted audits, including A-133 audits if applicable, and financial reports.
- c. Address the alignment between expenditures and the school's mission and plans for student academic growth and staff professional development.
- d. Review how any significant fiscal challenges were addressed during the current charter term.
- e. Describe efforts to operate the school in a financially sound and transparent manner.
- f. Explain why the school's financial condition merits renewal of the charter.

Section IV – Future Plans/Projections

- a. Provide an overview of the charter school's future goals and plans for goal achievement. Include the plan for:
 - i. Academics and updated academic benchmarks
 - ii. Organizational changes (if applicable)
 - iii. Expansion (if applicable)



- iv. Facility improvements
- v. Projected financial security
- vi. Operational management
- vii. Addressing any past academic, organizational, or financial deficits

Appendices (15 pages maximum)

Renewal applicants may append documents supporting the renewal application. Any appendices should be clearly labeled and referenced in the narrative of the application.