



2015 New School Development

New Schools for South Carolina's Future

The Alliance provides:



- ⇒ National Best Practices in Startup
- ⇒ Free Webinars and Online Resources and Tools
- ⇒ Free Pre-Charter Year Membership
- ⇒ Charter Incubator Training
- ⇒ Technical Assistance to EMOs/CMOs
- ⇒ Free Charter Committee Training

*"I know we would not be where we are today
without the guidance of the Alliance. We would not have opened without them."*

- Founding Charter Committee Member

Charter Starter Writers Webinars to Watch:

Pre-recorded	#1 Charter Starter – Launching Here http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD86844D3C
February 16	#2 Making your Mission Matter and How to Measure It http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD8686483D
February 23	#3 - Understanding Budget Basics and Student Interest Documentation http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD89804F3D
March 2	#4 Governance and Operation of Successful Charters http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD8980483E
March 16	#5 Application Component Review and Aligning your Application http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD89814F3E
April 6	#6 FAQs and Appendix Review http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EB55DD89814E3E

Contact: Mary Carmichael, Executive Director – Mary.Carmichael@SCCharterSchools.org

Please Note: Participating in PCSASC programs or membership does not guarantee charter approval.
www.sccharterschools.org

7 Steps to a Successful Charter:

1. Know **WHY** you are doing this and **WHO** you are doing this for.
2. Create a **mission** for the school that inspires innovative paths to both implement it and to measure it in the classroom by educators.
3. Develop a charter committee with the **capacity** to survive one of the most difficult things they will ever do.
4. Demonstrate capacity with a budget that is financially sound, is supported by actual documented student interest, and is **aligned** with what is in the charter document.
5. Find one person that is detail oriented and computer savvy to **orchestrate** the compilation of the final documents – that person, most likely, it is not the visionary in the group.
6. With increased autonomy comes increased **accountability**. Make whatever you are going to measure in your goals and objectives matter to your mission.
7. Provide the **community** with a reason to believe that the status quo is not their only option.

Please take time to read the complete law, but here is the section specifically on the charter application:

(F) The charter school application, based on an application template with compliance guidelines developed by the State Department of Education, must include:

- (1) an executive summary, not to exceed two pages;
- (2) the mission statement of the charter school, which must be consistent with the principles of the General Assembly's purposes pursuant to Section 59-40-20;
- (3) the goals, objectives, and academic performance standards to be achieved by the charter school, and a description of the charter school's admission policies and procedures;
- (4) evidence that an adequate number of parents or legal guardians with students eligible to attend the proposed school pursuant to Section 59-40-50 support the formation of a charter school and justify the projected per pupil allocation in the application budget;
- (5) a description of the charter school's educational program, including how it will meet or exceed the academic performance standards and expectations, including academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education and how the instructional design, learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum, and teaching methods enable each pupil to achieve these standards;

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(6) a description of the charter school's plan for evaluating pupil achievement and progress toward accomplishment of the school's achievement standards in addition to state assessments, the timeline for meeting these standards, and the procedures for taking corrective action if that pupil achievement falls below the standards;

(7) evidence that the plan for the charter school is economically sound, a proposed budget for the term of the charter, a description of the manner in which an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the charter school, including any services provided by the sponsor, is to be conducted;

(8) a description of the governance and operation of the charter school, including a detailed school start-up plan, resumes and background information on the charter committee members, the capacity and experience of the school leadership and management team, any involvement with the replication of existing successful public charter schools, any proposed management company or educational service provider responsibilities, and the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the charter school;

(9) a description of how the charter school plans to ensure that the enrollment of the school is similar to the racial composition of the local school district in which the charter school is to be located or the targeted student population of the local school district that the charter school proposes to serve and provide assurance that the school does not conflict with any school district desegregation plan or order in effect for the school district in which the charter school is to be located;

(10) a description of how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its pupils;

(11) a description of the building, facilities, and equipment and how they shall be obtained;

(12) an explanation of the relationship that shall exist between the proposed charter school and its employees, including a staffing chart aligned with the budget and student enrollment projections, descriptions of evaluation procedures, and evidence that the terms and conditions of employment have been addressed with affected employees;

(13) a description of a reasonable grievance and termination procedure, as required by this chapter, including notice and a hearing before the governing body of the charter school. The application must state whether or not the provisions of Article 5, Chapter 25, Title 59 apply to the employment and dismissal of teachers at the charter school;

(14) a description of student rights and responsibilities, including behavior and discipline standards, and a reasonable hearing procedure, including notice and a hearing before the board of directors of the charter school before expulsion;

(15) an assumption of liability by the charter school for the activities of the charter school and an agreement that the charter school must indemnify and hold harmless the sponsor, its servants, agents, and employees, from any and all liability, damage, expense, causes of action, suits, claims, or judgments arising from injury to persons or property or otherwise which arises out of the act, failure to act, or negligence of the charter school, its agents and employees, in connection with or arising out of the activity of the charter school; and

(16) a description of the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the charter school.

(G) Nothing in this section shall require a charter school applicant to provide a list of prospective or tentatively enrolled students or prospective employees with the application.

Please check for updates at: <http://www.scharterschools.org/charter-application-resources>

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New Schools for South Carolina's Future **Frequently Asked Questions from Planning Groups**



How do we explain charter schools in our community?

Be positive. Explain the solutions your school is going to be bringing to the community without attacking past efforts or the local school district. Engage the community in the new opportunities. Discuss the autonomy your school will have as a charter to meet the needs of students.

Educate the community that charter schools:

- are public schools.
- are free.
- do not have admissions tests or other barriers to entrance.
- are financially accountable non-profit corporations.
- have autonomy from the school district.
- & bring innovation and resources into the classroom where they belong.

What role do Public Charter Schools play in South Carolina's Future?

Charter schools have proven to be an expedient and efficient way of the changing the landscape of public education in SC. Technical assistance is provided by the Alliance in the planning, development, and implementation of new innovative schools based on the needs of their communities through a process similar to a business incubator model.

How many students are attending public charter schools in South Carolina?

There are over 26,000 students enrolled in South Carolina's 66 public charter schools. There are approximately 9,000 enrolled in the 9 virtual public charter schools.

Where can I find the application guidelines?

SC Department of Education is finalizing the application. Updates will be posted here:
<http://www.sccharterschools.org/charter-application-resources>

Do I have to file for 501c3 status now?

No, most schools wait to file that after they are approved. Here are some incorporation steps you **do** need to take prior to submitting your charter:

1. First, you will file SC Articles of Incorporation with SC Secretary of State.
2. Draft Bylaws for the Initial Meeting of Charter Committee: (Bylaws do not need to be attached to Articles of Incorporation)
3. Once you have your Articles of Incorporation from the Secretary of State you will hold an initial meeting of your newly established corporation. Per SC Nonprofit Law, you must take the following actions at this meeting, at minimum, elect officers, adopt bylaws, and carry on other business brought before the meeting. Minutes of all meetings of nonprofit corporations must be recorded and maintained by the organization at its principal place of business.

Can charter schools have admissions tests or other requirements to enroll?

No, entrance exams are not allowed for admission to any Public Charter School in South Carolina. By law, charter schools must have a fair and open admission process, conducting outreach and recruitment to all segments of the community they serve. SC Charter Act requires there be no barriers to entrance. The SC Charter Act requires schools to hold a lottery if there are more applications than open slots per grade. Public charter schools are nonsectarian and nondiscriminatory in admission and employment practices.

Sign up for the Alliance Incubator at

<http://www.sccharterschools.org/start-up-incubator>

Can public charter schools hire non-certified teachers?

Start-up charter schools may hire up to 25% of non-licensed faculty, however these teachers must still meet the highly qualified standards of the Federal (ESEA) requirements. Many of the non-certified teachers at public charter schools are university professors, professionals with critical career expertise, or teachers certified in other states.

Who needs to be on our Charter Committee?

Develop a diverse charter committee committed to seeing the mission and vision of the school through to implementation. The charter committee must demonstrate professional capacity in the application and the public hearing with your sponsor district. Per, the SC Charter Act, the charter committee dissolves upon the first election of the board during the first operating year.

Which sub-committees do we need?

Each Charter Committee develops slightly differently depending on the capacity of the individuals involved, but committees to consider developing include:

- Education
- Finance
- Governance
- Operations
- Facility
- Communications

Who is my sponsor?

In South Carolina, the charter sponsor is the public charter school authorizer. The charter (and the accompanying signed contract) is an agreement between the board of the charter school and the board of the sponsor. A public charter school in South Carolina may apply to be sponsored by:

- A local school district
- The SC Public Charter School District
- A University or Technical College

What should our first steps be?

- Research the need in the proposed community and be able to articulate it:
 - Identify student academic and developmental needs in the community you are proposing to serve.
<http://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/>
 - Research demographic information
<http://www.census.gov/www.kidscount.org>
 - Research what is currently in place to create change.
- Develop a high quality solution
 - Identify research based solutions with similar populations of students.
- Engage others in the efforts.
 - Begin to bring more people together with similar concerns around education in the community.
- Submit a Letter of Intent to Sponsor 90 days prior to submitting application. Copy to SCDE.
- Visit high performing public charter schools.
 - Note the culture of the school and the leadership.
 - Talk to founders about the realities of starting a public charter school.
- Start writing every day.
 - Develop a calendar with deadlines to complete each section by committee.
- Tune into the Charter Starter Webinar Series and consider applying for the Alliance Charter Incubator.

What does the Alliance do?

Our work focuses on transforming public education by advancing the missions of SC's public charter schools through:

- Technical Assistance and Professional Development with Schools
- Public Policy Development and Advocacy
- New School Development

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